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WALKING
IN THE
LIGHT



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WALKING IN THE LIGHT:

A MEMOIR

OF

MRS. HANNAH BAIRSTOW,

OF HUDDERSFIELD, YORKSHIRE.



BY THE REV. THORNLEY SMITH,

AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORIES OF JOSEPH," "MOSES," AND "JOSHUA," ETC., ETC.

LONDON: WILLIAM TEGG.

1868.

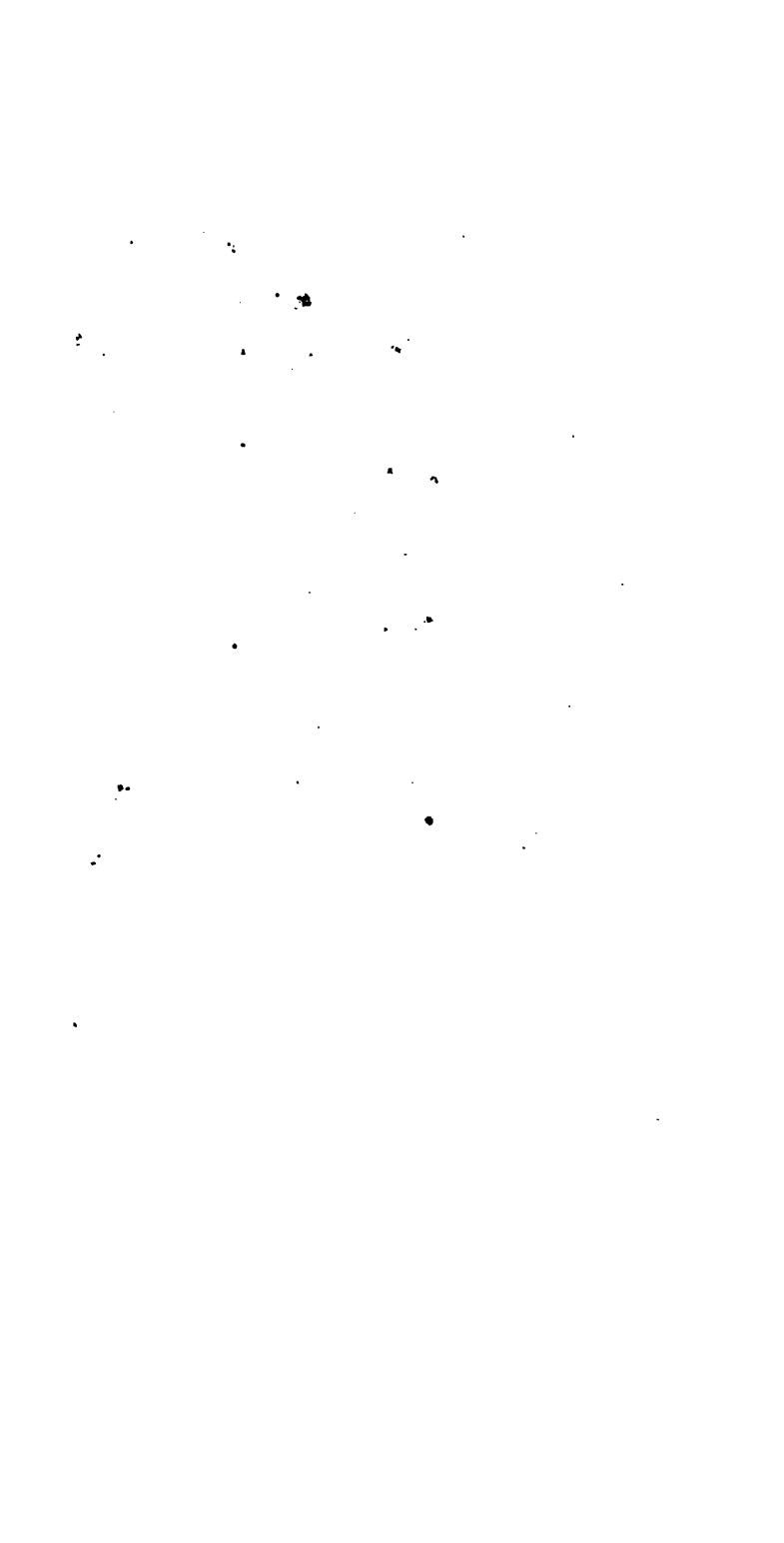
210. g. 297.

WALK in the light ! so shalt thou know
That fellowship of love
His Spirit only can bestow,
Who reigns in light above.

Walk in the light ! and thou shalt find
Thy heart made truly His,
Who dwells in cloudless light enshrined
In whom no darkness is.

Walk in the light ! and e'en the tomb
No fearful shade shall wear ;
Glory shall chase away its gloom ;
For Christ hath conquered there.

BERNARD BARTON.



PREFACE.

IT was not my privilege to be personally acquainted with the subject of this Memoir. But, during my residence in Huddersfield, I heard much of her piety, zeal, and usefulness; and her letters and papers having been put into my hands, I thought, on perusing them, that they contained materials worthy of preservation, and calculated to be of service to the Church of Christ; and I have done what I could to form them into a little volume, which I now send forth, with the earnest hope that it may be the means of inspiring others with similar devotedness to the service of the Saviour to that which it describes.

The title I have adopted—"Walking in the Light"—is, I believe, expressive of Mrs. Bairstow's experience through the greater portion of her somewhat chequered course. From the day

that she trusted in Jesus as her Saviour, and received the assurance of the Divine favour, she walked in the light indeed; for, amidst all her trials, persecutions, and sufferings, there was never, so far as I can gather, any doubt upon her mind as to her personal acceptance in the Beloved. And, O! how great a privilege is it thus to walk! "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) But there are professors of religion, not a few, who do not walk in the light. For some reason or other they fail to secure the bright experience of which St. Paul so frequently speaks in his Epistles; and hence, though sincere, it may be, in their desires to serve God, they walk, not in light, but in mists and shadows; and the service they render is not that of free and happy children, but of dejected and melancholy slaves. To any such who may take up this volume, I would say, Read it, and behold in it an illustration of the blessedness of getting within the brightest beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and of thus

taking the mountain-path to heaven. To walk in the light you must enter the light ; and you can enter it only by penitent faith in Christ as the Saviour of mankind ; for St. Paul says, " Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ : by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. v. 1, 2.) This was the light which Mrs. Bairstow entered, and in which she walked for many years ; and, walking in it herself, she led others into it, who found it as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

The beneficial influence on our churches of Christian females, it is impossible to estimate. Whatever may be said of the superiority of the opposite sex in mental power and literary attainment, certain it is that females when imbued with the spirit of Christianity are able to benefit others, in the most gentle, but most effectual way. By the piety of a sister has many a wayward youth been checked in a career of sin ; by the devotedness of a wife has many a faith-

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less husband been led back to his home and to his God; and by the counsels, prayers, and tears of a mother, have both thoughtless sons and daughters been preserved from ruin and from death. Much has been written respecting the mothers of great men: how much might be said of the mothers of ordinary men,—of men who, if not great in the highest sense of the term,—great statesmen, great poets, great divines,—are, notwithstanding, good men, and, in their several spheres are serving their generation, according to the will of God, with much fidelity and zeal? Are not the characters of thousands of such being moulded by the influence of pious mothers every day? Yes, the mothers of the land are, to a great extent, forming, for good or for evil, the character of the age; and those who are themselves walking in the light of truth and holiness, are leading into that light their children and their children's children, for which society will bless them, even though their names may never be the theme of the poet's song.

Bishop Jeremy Taylor says, in his sermon on the death of the Countess of Carbery, "I have seen a formal religion that wholly dwelt upon the face and tongue; that, like a wanton and undressed tree, spends all its juice in suckers and irregular branches, in leaves and gum; and after all such goodly outsides, you should never eat an apple, or be delighted with the beauties or the perfumes of a hopeful blossom. But the religion of this excellent lady was of another constitution; it took root downward in humility, and brought forth fruit upward in the substantial graces of a Christian, in charity and justice, in chastity and modesty, in fair friendships and sweetness of society: she had not very much of the forms and outsides of godliness, but she was hugely careful for the power of it, for the moral, essential, and useful parts, such which would make her be, not seem to be, religious." And such I believe was the "constitution" of Mrs. Bairstow's religion. The forms and outsides of godliness she had, but with them she had much of the power also; and, as these pages will

testify, that power was felt in whatever circle she moved; for on her lips

Perpetually did reign

The summer calm of golden charity.

This brief memorial of her is sent forth, however; not to exalt her, but to exalt the Saviour, whom she loved. What she was, she was by His grace; and what His grace made her, it can make others also. If the spirits of the just made perfect are conversant with what is said or written of them here, the publication of this volume will give satisfaction to the subject of it, only as it tends to the Divine glory,—only as it leads others to follow Christ, and to walk in the light of which He is the eternal source. May He deign to render it of some service to His church, and may such Christian females be multiplied in the land ten thousand times!

T. S.

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CHAPTER I.

Early Days.

CHILDREN ALWAYS TURN TO THE LIGHT. O THAT GROWN-
UP PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD WOULD BECOME LIKE
LITTLE CHILDREN!

GUESSES AT TRUTH.

**“ SUFFER these little ones to come to Me ”
Was the command of Him who on the cross
Bowed His anointed head, and with His blood
Purchased redemption for our fallen race :
And blessed they who to that holy task
Devote the energies of their young years,
Teaching, with pious care, the dawning light
Of infant intellects to know the Lord.**

C. HUNTINGDON.

MEMOIR, &c.

CHAPTER I.

Early Days.

MEMORIALS of the wise and good are almost as numerous as the dew-drops of the morning. They have been multiplying from the earliest ages of the Church ; and all ranks and orders of society, from the monarch on the throne to the hard-worn labourer in the field, have furnished subjects of the deepest interest for the pen of the biographer ; so that no department of literature is more extensive, and none more important and instructive, than this. Doubtless many memoirs, when written, are read only by a few contemporaries and friends, and then disappear, and are heard of no more ; but even the most ephemeral are of value, and produce impressions on some minds which tell, more or less, on their welfare ; and there are many minor biographies, (that of the “ Dairy-

man's Daughter," for instance,) which will never be allowed to die.

We add another to the stock,—a Memoir of one who occupied no very public sphere of life, but who, nevertheless, exerted an influence in the circle in which she moved of the most beneficial nature, and which will, we trust, be felt by her posterity and others for many years to come.

Hannah Watt was born at Middleton, near Beverley, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, on the 11th of July, 1816. Her mother was connected with the old aristocratic family of the Dentons of Beverley; and her father, before his marriage, had been in the army, had travelled in many parts of the world, and was present at the siege of Demerara when it was taken from the Dutch. He had three children, of whom Hannah was the second; but, whilst she was very young, he went to America, where he was seized with cholera and died. His first-born child had previously been removed to a better world; but his widow was now left upon the world with her two little girls, to provide for, and bring them up, as best she could. Hannah's education had consequently to suffer; but she possessed a thoughtful and a capacious mind, and, being very anxious to acquire knowledge,

she read such books as she could obtain, and especially the Word of God.

Her mother married again, hoping that she would find in her second husband one who would be a help to her in training her children for God. But the step proved a disastrous one;—discord entered the family, and the poor little girls had to suffer in many ways from the unkind and ungenerous conduct of their step-father.

For comfort Hannah had recourse to the Bible, which was her frequent companion, and which led her, at eight years of age, to see her need of a Saviour, and to seek God's mercy in prayer. She regularly attended the parish church; but its services did not exactly meet her wants, and she longed for some pious friend to whom she could unfold the deep feelings of her heart. She went one day into an orchard in which there was a large old tree, the trunk of which was hollow, and spacious enough for the child to enter. That hollow tree became her closet, and to it she often retired to pour out her prayers to God. And He who saw Nathanael under the fig tree, and Zacchæus in the sycamore tree, saw Hannah Watt in that retired spot, and listened to her earnest cry. A class-

meeting of the Primitive Methodists met next door to her mother's house ; and it was impressed on her mind that she should go to it, and seek help. She went, and took her seat amidst the little company of worshippers. They were chiefly aged persons, and the leader addressed each of them, but, strange to say, took no notice of the child. The benediction was pronounced ; and now her cup of sorrow was full to the very brim, and she began to lisp, " Lord help me." Louder and more impassioned did her voice become, until at length she was enabled to rest by faith on Christ, and there and then she became conscious of His forgiving love.

She never forgot that scene. The leader of the class, the chair on which she sat, the cold bricks on which she knelt, were ever afterwards photographed on her mind, and there remained to the latest day of her life. But the wonder is that she was not thoroughly discouraged. The neglect of children, on the part of Christian professors, is without excuse. So bright an example has our Lord given us of tender regard to the young, that those who in any way offend or disregard them are open to severe reproof. In this case, as doubtless in many others, it was probably for want of thought that the leader did

not speak to the child ; or because he fancied that she was too young to know anything about true religion. It was well for the child that the Saviour knew her heart, and that the Holy Spirit led her thus to pray. Let us not despise "one of these little ones ;" but let us do everything we can to encourage them, and to foster in their breasts the emotions which are working there. The Church has yet to learn more thoroughly her duty to the lambs of Christ's flock, to be more assiduous in her care of them, and to recognise them as part of the solemn charge entrusted to her by the Lord of all. When she receives them into her fold by baptism, she ought to enfold them in her warm embrace ; and, dealing with them very tenderly, and with all affection, try to prevent their going astray. Many children wander from her for want of better training, and of deeper sympathy and care. They are discouraged by not being spoken to, by being treated as if religion were something that they could not understand, and by being kept back from the Lord's table, when they ought most certainly to be allowed to go. "The little, saintly daughter, for example, of a venerable Presbyterian minister, aching for a place at the Lord's table, goes to her father,

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after being several times put off by him and by the session, asking, 'Father, when shall I be old enough to be a Christian?' He and his session, alas! did not believe that 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Had the dear child gone to Jesus, she certainly would have gotten a different answer. True,—the religious experience of children is, of course, small;—only not as small, or unreliable, by any means, as the experience commonly is of an adult convert only a few weeks old. Besides, what is the use of a fold, if the lambs are to be kept outside till it is seen whether they can stand the weather?"*

Hannah, having obtained the pearl of great price, joined the class, and thus became a member of the Primitive Methodist Society. In almost all Methodist circles it is well known that this Society is an offshoot from the larger body founded by the Rev. John Wesley. It differs from the latter only in matters of discipline; and, having gone on quietly in the tenor of its way, it has found a large field of usefulness among a class of people which other churches have scarcely reached, and God has crowned its labours with considerable success. The little girl knew nothing about questions of

* Bushnell's "Christian Nurture," part ii., chap. iv.

church polity; enough for her that she found among these people a few warm hearts who could sympathize with her, and help her in the way to heaven. But difficulties arose. Her mother was somewhat fond of dress, whilst Hannah's tender conscience led her to wish to dispense with finery, and to prefer a very plain attire. She found it difficult also to obtain money for her class-ticket; and when the first love-feast was about to be held, which it was her earnest wish to attend, she had not so much as a penny to put into the box. But without the penny it would not, she thought, be right to go. What did she then? For a week beforehand she made it a matter of prayer to God, whose are the silver and the gold, and the cattle upon a thousand hills; and, in artless simplicity, asked Him to supply her need. She had prayed for the fifteenth time when she met the leader of the class, who said to her, "Well, Hannah, are you going to the love-feast on Sunday?" She made no reply, but hung down her head and began to weep. "Perhaps," said the leader, "you have not a penny to give; here is one for you:" and with that her heart bounded with joy. She went to the love-feast, and it proved to her a special means of grace.

There is no power in prayer, say some ; but this humble, unsophisticated child thought there was. It never entered her mind to doubt it. She found it written, "Ask, and it shall be given you ;" and she asked, and proved it true. Nor did she suppose that it was by mere chance that the leader gave her a penny, but doubtless thought that God had disposed his heart to do so. Was she not right ? Let the semi-sceptics of the day say what they will, we affirm that she was ; and were there more of such simple confidence in Christian professors, they would take firmer hold of that Almighty arm which sustains all nature, and keeps the planets in their spheres.

In a little while the family removed to another residence, where they had a garden, which to Hannah was an unceasing source of profit and delight. She was passionately fond of flowers ; and there was not a flower in the garden plot, whose beauty and fragrance did not lead her mind to God. A child among flowers is a very lovely sight ; and happy should all be who dwell within their precincts, and are allowed to see them bloom. Children there are, who live in dark and narrow lanes of over-crowded towns, to whom a flower is a very rare sight, and

who seldom or never breathe the perfume of the new-mown hay. Such children are to be pitied ; it is no wonder that they are sickly, and look pale and wan. Would that all children could enjoy, in the spring and summer of the year especially, a little of the freshness and the freedom of country life ; would that the love of flowers were cultivated by children of a larger growth !

There is a lesson in each flower,
A story in each stream and bower ;
On every herb on which you tread
Are written words, which, rightly read,
Will lead you from earth's fragrant sod
To hope, to holiness, and God.

Flowers are not absolutely necessary for our outward life, and God might have made the earth without adorning it with a single lily, rose, or daisy. Why, then, has He scattered them with such profusion at our feet ? Surely for the purpose of beautifying our abode, and thereby ministering to our happiness and joy. Specially were flowers made for children, as I think ; for we never enjoy them more than in our childhood, except, perhaps, when they are brought in bouquets to enliven the sick chamber, and to fill it with the fragrance they exhale. I wonder not

that they are oft the poet's theme ; and I too say, as Wordsworth did,—

To me the meanest flowers that bloom can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

Well, Hannah loved the flowers ; and took delight in watching them, in examining their structure, and in observing in them proofs of the Creator's skill and power. Perhaps they made up to her the lack of other things. Perhaps, by this means, her heavenly Father spoke to her childlike mind, and thereby wrought upon it, when home influences of a genial kind were wanting ; for, as we shall see, they were wanting indeed ; and Hannah had to sustain a fiery ordeal by which her faith was tried to the very uttermost.

Is the reader in the bloom of youth ? Let me commend him to religion as the true adornment of the mind, and the lasting source of peace. To both sexes it is a treasure of untold worth,—to the stronger, adding strength ; to the weaker, loveliness and grace. To the young who move in the higher circles of society, it is a shield to protect them from the blandishments and follies of the age ; to those whose lot is cast among the lowly and the poor, it is a staff to help them in life's difficult and rugged road. And, happily, it

may be obtained by all. Wisdom speaks alike to rich and poor, and invites them to the palace she has built, saying, "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither." "I love them that love Me, and those that seek Me early shall find Me." And Wisdom's palace is a more beautiful and spacious one than was ever erected by human art. It is not a palace of gold or crystal, in which fairy fountains play, and the walls of which are adorned with the pictures of the great:—all such palaces are doomed to perish; and, whilst they stand, they cannot pacify the troubled conscience, or give true comfort to the wounded mind. The palace of Wisdom is built on the pillars of Divine truth, and there a banquet is provided for the soul, making it glad when sorrowful, and filling it with hope even in the darkest hour. Happy those who, like Hannah Watt, turn into it betimes, and spend within its precincts their earliest years! Toils and conflicts they may have; but Wisdom's voice will ever cheer them, and Wisdom's arm will be ever underneath them; nor will she fail to lead them ultimately to her choicest rooms, where her banner over them will be eternal love. Accept her invitation. She has ample room in her house, and she is anxious that her guests

should be many; so that she urges all, without exception, to eat of her bread, and to drink of the wine she has mingled. Folly has her palace too; and she too is seeking, most assiduously, to attract the young, and to draw them into the meshes of her net; but "her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death;" and therefore Wisdom says, "Hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord." (Prov. viii. 9.)



CHAPTER II.

Discipline.

WHERE GOD'S NUMEROUS MERCIES ARE BESTOWED, THEY ARE DESIGNED TO LEAD MEN TO REPENTANCE: WHEN HIS NUMEROUS AFFLICTIONS FALL ON US, THEY ARE DESIGNED AS MERCIFUL CORRECTIONS, CALLING OFF OUR THOUGHTS FROM THINGS FRIVOLOUS AND INJURIOUS, AND FIXING THEM UPON SUBJECTS IN THEIR OWN NATURE THE MOST WORTHY OF OUR ATTENTION.

RICHARD WATSON.

THOUGH we pass through tribulation,
All will be well ;
Ours is such a full salvation,
All, all is well !
Happy, still to God confiding,
Fruitful, if in Christ abiding,
Holy, through the Spirit's guiding,
All must be well.

MARY BOWLY.

CHAPTER II.

Discipline.

GOD leads many of His children, even in very early life, through a course of painful discipline, with a view to prepare them for future usefulness, and to bring to greater perfection the graces of their Christian character. Storms roll over them so terrible and severe, that it seems as if they must be swept down before them ; but, having their root firmly planted in the soil, they bend before the blast, but do not break ; and deeper and yet deeper do their hidden branches penetrate the ground, whilst higher and yet higher do those which are visible rise and flourish in the air.

It was the lot of Hannah Watt to sustain trials of no ordinary kind. The family might have been happy in their rural home, but her step-father, who had once been a Methodist, but was now a sceptic, neglected his business, and broke up his house. Hannah had to witness the whole of the furniture sold by an auctioneer,

and the proceeds of the sale handed over to the man who cared neither for his wife, nor for the fatherless children. In the intensity of her grief she left the small but commodious residence in the country with streaming eyes ; and the quiet little village was exchanged for the bustle and din of Liverpool.

Here the family were as strangers in a strange land ; but they took a house suitable for business in a public part of the town ; and, having deposited in it their luggage, Hannah's step-father went out with all the money in his pocket, which he got from the sale, saying that he was going to purchase furniture, and would be back in a short time. His wife and her two children watched him with much anxiety, scarcely knowing what would be the issue. Where were they ? In a house without a chair or table, without food, and without fire ; and there they stood till the day began to wane, and one solitary lamp which they possessed was lit to cheer the gloom. At length the man came back, looking embarrassed and confused, and said that he had been knocked down in the street, and robbed of every penny he possessed. Was the story true ? They could not tell ; but thus were they left in penury and distress, and but

for a superabundant wardrobe, part of which they were compelled to pledge, utter starvation would have stared them in the face.

One feels indignant at the very thought of conduct so base as this ; but men there are who are capable of inflicting, even upon those whom they have promised to watch over and to cherish, the vilest wrongs. When infidel principles are once imbibed, it is impossible to say how far the victim of them may be led astray. Where are the happy homes which scepticism has reared ? It is a moral blight upon the family compact ; and whatever it touches withers under its deadly power. Indeed, the only true safeguard of domestic happiness is practical religion. This is it which alone secures

“The beauty and the blessedness of life,”
which adorns alike the palace and the cottage,
and which gives to families of every rank a
true, solid, and abiding peace.

It was wanting in the home of Hannah Watt ; and now that home was homeless, and the poor child was in the greatest possible distress. But a lady who lived near, having observed her pensive countenance, inquired who she was ; and at length spoke to her, and got to know

that the family was in need, and would be glad of any employment they could find. The lady agreed to take Hannah to sew for her, and Hannah went with a ready mind. At the close of the first week, the lady sent her on an errand to purchase some biscuits; but being ignorant of the manner in which they were generally sold, she bought them by the dozen instead of by the pound. On her return her mistress asked her several questions, and then told her that she would not require her services any more, but wished to see her mother. The mother went on the Monday, when the lady charged her daughter with theft; on hearing which Hannah, conscious of her innocence, went to the lady, who agreed to go with her to the shopkeeper to inquire into the matter. "Poor child," said he, "you are in trouble from your anxiety to do right;" and he at once satisfied the lady of Hannah's honesty, and then said to her, "Who but yourself, Madam, could have suspected that gentle girl?"

Whether the lady was ashamed we know not, but ashamed she ought to have been; for to harbour suspicions when there is but little ground for them, is most ungenerous and unjust. To be suspected of dishonesty is, to

an honest person, often as severe a trial as he can well sustain ; for his character is to him more precious than his life. But the trial has often to be borne ; for even the most upright characters are liable to fall into the hands of the jealous and distrustful ; and here was a little girl, thirteen years of age, whose nature was as transparent as the light, under the charge of being a thief ! God, however, was her Defender, and brought forth her “righteousness as the light, and her judgment as the noonday.” She could have said,—

“ Lord, when my troubled spirit could not rest
For anguish of my mind, Thou knewest best
What way to help me, and didst see
A path through all to set me free.
Thy foes and mine do lay
Snares, for me, in my way
One and privily
In ambush lie.

“ Thus troubled ; laid wait for, desolate,
Enclosed around ; and thus disconsolate,
I cried to Thee, O Lord, and said,
Thou art my hope, my help, my aid,
The rock I build upon
My lot, my portion
For this life, and
A better land.”

Hannah was now placed with some respectable person, to learn the business of a dress-maker ; but here her hardships were severe and numerous. With a scanty breakfast she went to her employment, and at noon returned home to dinner, but often found none ; and thus passed many a dreary day of privation and of want, so that the wonder is that her health did not break down. Let us hear her own tale, as told in her Journal :—

“ I generally rise at six o'clock, attend to my ordinary duties, prepare breakfast, &c., &c., and then set off to my work, a mile and a half distant, at eight o'clock. As fast as my fingers will allow me, I stitch until noon, when half an hour is allowed for dinner. This I generally spend in the garden, under pretence of getting my dinner, with which I am often compelled to dispense. My poverty is often a great trouble to me ; for the young ladies who are my fellow-apprentices are very superior, having received good educations, and paid handsome premiums. One is the daughter of a clergyman, and others are equally respectable.” Again she writes : “ Every day this week I have been miserable. Five yards of expensive ribbon have been missed from Miss M.'s. Every apprentice has had

something to do with it ; but I brought in the roll. O God, deliver me." Subsequently she writes, " The ribbon is found, and my innocence is apparent to all."

Again she says : " O God, Thou hast been with me a whole year,—a stranger in a strange land. I am now thirteen, and my cruel father has kept me in close confinement for twelve months, to put a stop to my Methodism ; but the Bible has been my constant companion, and whilst the church-going bell is summoning the people to worship, I read in Jeremiah, ' It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth ;' (Lam. iii. 27 ;) and then my favourite hymn, the first I could ever sing, comes to my mind,—

' God moves in a mysterious way,' &c."

This was indeed bearing the yoke, and had not the arm of the Almighty been her support under such a yoke, Hannah must have sunk. But how true is the promise, " As thy days, so shall thy strength be !" and how vigorous must have been the piety of this young person, which enabled her to pass through conflicts so severe !

Hannah became very anxious to join herself

to a Christian church, and one Sunday she went with her mother into a chapel, which proved to be for the Welsh ; but the next Sabbath they found Leeds-Street Chapel, and thither she repaired Sunday after Sunday for several weeks. But no one spoke to her ; no kind voice invited her to a class. Christian congregations are often neglectful of strangers, and many a person is discouraged, and perhaps driven away from a place of worship, for want of a little attention on the part of those who meet in it. One Sunday evening, however, a Captain Purnell addressed her very kindly, and gave the invitation for which she longed. The following Sunday found her at the class, which was in Captain Purnell's own house ; and now she was like the dove, which, after wandering far and wide, found rest and shelter in the ark. The Rev. Jabez Bunting having become the Superintendent of the Circuit, he advised that the class should be removed to the vestry of Leeds-Street Chapel ; and the first Sabbath after this, Hannah was waiting for her leader at the door, when a young female inquired of her if there was preaching there. " No," she replied, " but there is a class, and the leader will be delighted to see you." On his arrival he said, " Well, Hannah, have

you been casting your net?" She replied, "Yes; and I have caught one." This young person found peace with God that afternoon, and died triumphantly the following week. How blessed is it to be ever on the alert for doing good!

Hannah was now advancing in knowledge and experience; but that her trials were still heavy the following extract will show:—"What a glorious Sabbath was the past! My step-father gave me permission to attend the Lovefeast. I sat with my leader, and he asked me to speak. Nearly paralysed with fear, and ready to choke with emotion, I rose to my feet, and gave a short account of my conversion, and of some of my trials. I thought the people would turn me out of the chapel; but, to my utter astonishment, many were bathed in tears. A Missionary's widow invited me to tea, whither I went, and found a room full of devoted Christians. It was the atmosphere I loved to breathe in; but I had to suffer greatly, for on my return home I was so severely beaten, that I could scarcely lie down in bed; but this was no unusual thing."

But this was not all. Her own much-loved father had bequeathed to her a valuable old Bible, printed in the year 1638. This treasure—

for such she deemed it—her step-father frequently got from her to pledge for money. It was now, however, in her possession, and she resolved never to part with it again. Enraged at her refusal to give it up to him again, the infuriated man drove her, in the darkness of the night, from the shelter of her home, with nothing on but her night-dress. She wandered up and down by the churchyard for some time, wishing herself at rest with those who slept beneath the sod, when at length her persecutor, stricken in his conscience, came and conducted her home.

All this she bore with exemplary meekness, praying often even for him who thus ill-treated her. She was now sixteen years of age, and was very anxious to commence family prayer in the dwelling. What said her father? Taking up the kitchen poker, he threatened to cleave her head in two, if she mentioned it again. This would have been enough to deter a half-hearted professor; but Hannah's purpose was not to be frustrated by threats; she read a psalm, fell down on her knees, and was so remarkably assisted in prayer, that she could willingly have sacrificed her life for Christ. The man refused to bow his knees, but God's hand was upon him;

for scarcely had the dear girl risen up from prayer ere he was prostrated with a fit, and her next duty was to administer to him restoratives. From that day family worship was established, and Hannah was the devoted priestess of the household.

Such was the discipline, painful and mysterious, by which her heavenly Father was preparing Hannah Watt for her future sphere of usefulness in the Church. She could not understand it, yet it was doubtless for the best. That her step-father should treat her with cruelty was not God's will most certainly ; but God employed this treatment for her good, and made use of it as the means by which to lead her more closely to Himself. She was persecuted for righteousness' sake, and her foe was one of her own household ; but she had the testimony within that God was pleased with her, and she knew that He could make the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of that wrath could restrain and hold in check. Calmly, therefore, did she rest on the promises of her Heavenly Father, and often, when breathing out her sorrow at His feet, did she feel that He cared for her, and was her succour and defence. Let those who are similarly tried follow her example ; and

let them remember the words of the Great Teacher, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad : for great is your reward in heaven : for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Matt. v. 11, 12.)

CHAPTER III.

Usefulness.

THE NEW LEAVEN IN THE MASS IS THE HUMBLE, TRANQUIL, OBSCURE, ACTIVE VIRTUE OF THOUSANDS OF THE FAITHFUL, DIFFUSED THROUGH ALL THE RECESSES OF SOCIETY, STRUGGLING BY THEIR EXAMPLE AND THEIR PRAYERS AGAINST THE GENERAL DEPRAVITY, AND CAUSING THEIR LIGHT TO SHINE BEFORE MEN SO SWEETLY AS AT LEAST TO ATTRACT SOME.

VINET.

O LORD, Thy heavenly grace impart,
And fix my frail inconstant heart ;
Henceforth my chief desire shall be
To dedicate myself to Thee,
To Thee, my God, to Thee.

Whate'er pursuits my time employ,
One thought shall fill my soul with joy ;
That silent, secret thought shall be,
That all my hopes are fix'd on Thee,
On Thee, my God, on Thee.

J. F. OBERLIN.

CHAPTER III.

Usefulness.

IN the Christian Church there is work for every one to do. It is a large and ample field, in which some must break up the fallow ground, others cast in the seed, and others again watch over it as it ripens, and then gather in the sheaves. Who need be idle in such a sphere? The youngest, poorest, meanest of God's servants may find useful employment if they are disposed to seek it; and what is life, if it be not employed in doing good to the bodies or to the souls of men?

“ I am a part of all that I have met ;
Yet all experience is an arch, where through
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use,
As though to breathe were life ! ”

To live is to do something more than breathe,
even the brute creation do more ; but a man

who is useless only breathes, and no more lives than the polypus on the rock. He only lives who serves his generation according to the will of God; and a life thus spent, even though its sphere be an humble one, is a life of blessedness, because it is the prelude of a nobler one to come.

The Methodist Church is pre-eminently a working Church. John Wesley was a man of unwearied labours, and he imbued with his active spirit many who worked with him, and they handed it down to their successors of the next generation, and the next. Hence, Methodism says to every convert, "Go work to-day in Christ's vineyard." It presses into its service young and old, rich and poor, male and female; and it is never so efficient as when its people are minding their several tasks, and trying to accomplish them as best they can.

Hannah Watt was called in early life to occupy a most important and responsible position. But ere we dwell upon it, an incident must be recorded which occurred just prior to her entrance on the work. Her friends were anxious that she should be introduced into worldly society; and they not only wished, but insisted on her going to the theatre. She

remonstrated, but in vain ; on which she asked the counsel of a devoted friend, who said, "Go, and let them see, that though you are willing to oblige, you cannot take pleasure in things of that kind." The advice was misjudged ; for no one should ever do wrong to please another. Hannah went, however, in company with the captain of a ship and a small party. They were put into a box, and a play-bill was placed in her hands ; but such a conflict ensued in her mind, that her friends were alarmed at her appearance, and it was with difficulty that she could be kept from praying aloud, that God would have mercy on both actors and people. The captain who accompanied her was greatly annoyed, and determined that he would either lead her or drive her from her Saviour. The following Sunday he daringly went to the class in which she met, and which was held in a vestry in Leeds-Street chapel ; and there he took his seat directly opposite her, in order to intimidate her, and excite her fears. She trembled exceedingly, and her knees smote together. When relating her experience, the thought struck her, "I must pray at the conclusion of the meeting." Her custom was to pray each alternate Sunday, and she thought again, "I

prayed last Sunday ;” but she could not resist the feeling, and, falling on her knees, she poured out her whole soul to God, her heart throbbing with deep emotion.

Some years after, when she was in a revival prayer-meeting, and, as her practice was, speaking to penitents, a stalwart, weather-beaten man walked across the aisle, and accosted her by name. She replied, “I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Sir.” “But I know you,” he said ; “and I have not forgotten the prayer you offered some years ago in Leeds-Street chapel. That prayer was the means of my conversion. I left England shortly after the meeting ; a storm arose, and there seemed no chance of escape from a watery grave. My conscience was aroused, and that prayer came back to my recollection, and so affected me that, retiring from the crew, I tried to use it. God heard my cry : the storm abated, and the ship was saved. I became a Christian from that day, and have ever since been trying to preach the Gospel ; sometimes on land, but oftener on the deep blue sea.”

The office of a class-leader in the Methodist Church is one of great importance and responsibility. The class-meeting is not a confessional,

but a meeting for mutual instruction, encouragement, and prayer. The duty of the leader is to ask each member the state of his mind and the character of his Christian experience, and to give him suitable advice and help. To do this efficiently from week to week, many qualifications are necessary ; and these, it was thought, Miss Watt possessed in a more than ordinary degree. She was therefore appointed to the office, and undertook it, in dependence on Divine grace and help. Her success was considerable, and to very many she was made a blessing, as subsequent pages of this Memoir will show. She ranks among the best and ablest female class-leaders, of whom Wesleyan Methodism has possessed so large a number.

Soon after her appointment, she met one of her members in the street, with whose Christian character she was not quite satisfied. She addressed to her some pertinent remarks, when some shoeless footsteps were heard behind, and, on turning round, she observed a poor basket-woman, who was selling oranges. This woman was a notorious Sabbath-breaker, and made most of her gains on that holy day. She heard some of the words which fell from the lips of Miss Watt, and, though they were addressed to

another, she felt them applicable to herself. She stopped, and Miss Watt then accosted her, and invited her to the house of God. She went early the next Lord's day; but her appearance was such, that the chapel-keeper kept his eye on her, fearing lest she should lay her hands on some of the hymn-books, &c., and set off. Miss Watt arrived, and greeted her with an approving smile; when the poor woman took her seat, somewhat relieved from her embarrassment. The word reached her heart; and after the service Miss Watt walked with her to her home. It was a low, damp cellar; but in it the poor woman became a true Christian, and was made happy in a Saviour's love. A short time afterwards, typhoid invaded the neighbourhood, the poor basket-woman fell a victim to it, but died in the full triumph of faith, and entered into rest. Was not this a brand plucked from the burning?

Miss Watt's class in the Sunday-school now became so large, that it was deemed necessary to divide it. Nearly all the girls who were taken from it remonstrated, saying that they had got all their good through her instrumentality, and did not wish to leave. "Go, then," she said, "and disseminate the good you have got;" and

appealing to their Christian benevolence, she urged them to live not unto themselves, but for the benefit of those around them.

One of the girls in the school was seized with scarlatina, and all the teachers declined visiting her, especially as her family were living a disreputable life. The child, however, had conducted herself with great propriety; and when Miss Watt was asked to go and see her, she at once complied. She went in her Master's name; and the door being opened by the child's wicked mother, the child recognised the voice of Miss Watt, and cried out, "O, mother, it is our superintendent; do speak kindly to her." A few words were addressed to the mother, and full permission was given to Miss Watt to visit the child whenever she could go.

These incidents are illustrative of the character of Hannah Watt, in this the bloom of her youth. Her piety was deep, sincere, and practical. She laboured for the good of others with singleness of eye; and wherever duty called her, however arduous the task might be, there she was found earnestly at work, thinking little of the difficulties she met with, but committing her way with confidence unto her God. Her labours, like those of many Christian

females, were in comparatively quiet and retired corners of the great vineyard of the Church ; but she did not sigh for some more public sphere, but was content to cultivate just that portion of the vineyard which was assigned to her, neither anxious for the smiles, nor fearful of the frowns, of men.

Whilst she was fervent in spirit, she was not slothful in business. She possessed a natural talent for her employment ; and the recommendations of Christian friends secured for her as much work as she could do. She rose early, plied her needle diligently through the day, and in the evening went to the house of God, or on some errand of mercy to the sick or poor. On the Sabbath morning a prayer-meeting was held in her own house, attended principally by members of her class, who met to supplicate the Divine blessing on the labours of the day. After breakfast she distributed tracts, then walked a mile to the Sunday-school ; in the afternoon met her class ; in the evening went to the house of God ; and often closed the day by visiting the almshouses, and conversing and praying with the poor who occupied them.

A gracious revival of religion took place, in connexion with which her persecuting stepfather-

and her only sister became the subjects of the grace of God. Early one morning, just after midnight, she awoke as if suffering from a severe pain in her head, when the man who had so often treated her with much cruelty came to her bedside, and said, "Hannah, my child, get up ; thy father's heart is smitten. He has sought and found the Lord, and thy sister has been joining him in prayer. Get up, and praise the Lord for His goodness." She arose immediately, and for some time continued to pour out her grateful acknowledgments to her Heavenly Father for such a manifestation of His grace and love.

Miss Watt now took a larger house, and furnished it, paid the debts of her step-father, and put her sister as an apprentice to a business, thus becoming, as it were, the saviour of her family, who, but for her piety, industry, and self-denial, must have remained in penury and want. What unspeakable blessings may one truly pious member of a family confer on all the rest ! Hannah was undoubtedly "the angel of the house ;" and her actions, words, and even looks, were radiant with the light of heaven. She reflected the image of her Lord ; and all who dwelt under her roof saw in her the

beauty of holiness and the power of Christian love.

She was the means of leading many to Christ; for she was instant in season and out of season, and was ever on the watch for opportunities of doing good. A young man appeared in the streets of Liverpool who was possessed of a remarkably sweet voice, and who sang Pope's funeral ode, "Vital spark," in so fascinating a manner as to gather round him large numbers of persons, who liberally rewarded him for his singing. He was, however, a lover of strong drink, and what he obtained he spent, so that he was always penniless and poor. He had married an educated Scotch girl, who, when they came to Liverpool, was in a state of confirmed consumption. Miss Watt obtained access to her, found her, with her children, in the very depths of poverty and distress, and directed her at once to Christ, as the sinner's only hope. One Sabbath afternoon she was sent for in haste, and, on reaching the comfortless home of the sufferer, found her bathed in the clammy sweat of death. But she was unspeakably happy. She had found the Saviour. And now she was waiting with joyful anticipation the moment of her release from the trials of this

sinful world. She died in triumph, and thus exchanged the troubles and privations of her earthly lot for the blessedness of a heavenly home.

Miss Watt had greatly rejoiced over the conversion of her step-father; and he and her mother took a small house, in which they lived together happily for a time; but, alas! his goodness was "as the morning cloud and early dew." He fell from grace, and relapsed into his former wicked habits. In the absence of his wife he disposed of every article of furniture in the house, and was seen passing the window early one morning, after which he was never heard of again. It is probable that he came to an untimely end: for "the way of transgressors is hard," and "the wicked shall be filled with the fruit of his own doings." Hannah's mother was now again dependent on her benevolence; but she bore this trouble also with fortitude, and did her utmost to render the declining days of her parent as happy as she could.

Miss Watt's house was in the neighbourhood of Scotland Road, then in the suburbs of Liverpool, but now a densely-populated neighbourhood. Scotland Road led to Kirkdale prison, and also to the race-course; and often large

multitudes of persons, of both sexes, passed the house, to witness executions, or to join in sinful pastimes and pursuits. A committee of young ladies was formed, of which Miss Watt was at the head, for the purpose of distributing tracts among these passengers; and these young ladies took up certain positions, and modestly offered to many a wanderer a little messenger of light and love. The tracts were frequently received and read, and many instances occurred, in which they were the means of reclaiming the transgressor from the error of his ways. For her own sex especially Miss Watt was often deeply anxious. She saw many pursuing paths of sin, over whom her tender heart yearned with the deepest commiseration and sorrow; and she tried in various ways to win them back to virtue and to God. One Sabbath evening, as she was returning from chapel, she met a number of these poor girls, accompanied by some young men, whom they were evidently attempting to decoy. She gave them a very pitying look, when one of the girls said, with a sneer, "Look at that sanctified Methodist!" Presently one of the young men came up to her, and apologized for the rudeness of the remark. She spoke to him, reasoned with

him, and urged him to turn from the paths of the transgressor. He confessed that he was unhappy, and she invited him to the house of God. There he was found on the following Sabbath evening, in deep penitence for sin ; and there he sought and found that mercy which is denied to none who ask it.

“In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths,” is a promise which has been often realized by young people, who have chosen God as their Guide and Friend. It was realized by Hannah Watt in many instances ; but especially in one, upon which her future history hung. An English lady, who had lost her husband in India, and had returned home to settle her affairs, met with Miss Watt, and was so greatly pleased with her, that she offered to take her to the East as her companion, promising her a most liberal salary, and a handsome settlement on her death. For a time Miss Watt was disposed to entertain the thought ; but her mother was all but desolate, and a sense of duty to her only parent,—a parent who had sustained a series of trials such as it is the lot of few to bear,—led her to decline the offer. “What,” she thought to herself, “will become of my dear mother if I leave England? No. I might

obtain a competency by going, but I will stay, and watch over, and be a comfort to my mother, and God, I doubt not, will be my help."

It was a noble resolution, and it met with its reward. Never does a young person forego worldly advantages for the sake of rendering happy a parent's declining years, but the smile of God rests upon the act. "Honour thy father and mother" is the first commandment with promise; and the promise is, "Thy days shall be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Not always is the promise fulfilled to the letter; for many die young, whose filial affection is of the sincerest kind; but under the Christian dispensation especially, God gives to all who respect their parents what is equivalent to a long life; and, in cases not a few, long life itself, with very many attendant blessings. Miss Watt was no loser in the end. Her business prospered, her usefulness increased, and in course of time another sphere of duty opened itself before her, in which she was made a blessing to many. Let the youthful reader, who has parents, or a parent, dependent on him, be faithful to his trust, and be willing, rather than leave that parent friendless and forlorn, to give up any worldly advantages that

may offer, and leave the rest with God. Upon that son or daughter who forsakes an aged parent for the sake "of wealth, or honour, or position in society, a curse will rest; but a blessing will come down upon that son or daughter who clings to, and provides for, an aged parent; and in a brighter sphere the reward of such an one will be rich indeed.

"I wish," says Swinnock, one of the Puritan divines, "that my love to my parents may show itself to be sincere, by my devoting both estate and body, according to Scripture, to their service. My reason tells me what I received from them, ought, under God, to be improved for them. O that the fire may on all occasions so flame out as to cheer and comfort their chill and cold aged bodies with its light and heat! How tender was David of his aged parents! (1 Sam. xxii. 3.) How kind was Joseph to all his kindred! The brutish eagles, though they be greedy enough of their prey, will yet spare it from themselves to feed their parents. Boughs bend towards their root. The ears of corn bow to the earth, their parent. And shall I suffer them to famish, who so many years gave me all my food, and, like the cruel kite, starve them who bred and fed me? Lord help me to show

piety at home, by requiting my parents; and rather let my hands wear out with work, than that they through my negligence should want."*

* Swinnock's Works, vol. i., p. 463.



CHAPTER IV.

New Spheres.

MARRIAGE WAS INSTITUTED IN PARADISE, IN THE HAPPIEST PLACE, TO SIGNIFY HOW HAPPY THEY ARE WHO MARRY IN THE LORD; THEY DO NOT ONLY MARRY ONE ANOTHER, BUT CHRIST IS MARRIED UNTO THEM.

HENRY SMITH.

THE blessing of a lowly mind,
Lord, unto me be given,
Joy in the meanest spot to find,
To see, in all of human kind,
But fellow-travellers design'd
To rest at last in heaven.

The pleasures of a lowly state,
O, let me ne'er despise ;
And, should I sit among the great,
Ne'er be my heart with pride elate,
But meekly let me watch and wait
In lowliness of guise.

EGONE.

CHAPTER IV.

New Spheres.

EARLY in the year 1840, Miss Watt became acquainted with Mr. Oates Bairstow, a young man of decided piety, and in many respects like-minded with herself. A mutual attachment sprung up, which resulted in their union on the 17th of August of that same year. On the day previous to the wedding, which was the Sabbath, as many of the members of her classes as the house would hold, met to plead with God for her welfare, the aged and the young mingling their tears and their supplications together in the most fervent manner possible. They little knew, she observed in her Journal, how much she needed their prayers; for she had not a single relative of her own present on the occasion. It was a beautiful testimony to her worth; and if young people would pray more respecting their friends who are about to be married, instead of thinking so much about what they are to wear and how

they are to be adorned, they would confer a far greater benefit upon them ; for marriage without the Divine blessing, whether the parties be rich or poor, can be productive of but short-lived bliss.

Those prayers were answered. The wedding was celebrated in the fear of God ; and at the feast Jesus was present, and the bridesmaid gave her heart to God, and found peace through believing in the blood of the Cross. Would that the wedding-feasts of all Christian professors were conducted as that was ! But how often are they scenes of frivolity and mirth ! how often is the glass indulged in to excess ! how often is prayer for the Divine blessing on the parties hurriedly presented, or presented not at all ! We have heard of instances in which, even when a minister has been present, the conversation has been too light and trifling to comport with religious worship ; and where, in consequence, the party has broken up without a word of prayer. Let us hope that such marriage-feasts are rare ; and that among Christian professors of all sections of the Church weddings are celebrated like that of Cana in Galilee, in which Jesus was a welcome guest.

A celebrated preacher of the last century,

Dr. Donne, thus concluded a sermon which he preached on the marriage of a noble lord and lady: "The God of heaven make you always of one will, and that will always conformable to His; conserve in you the sincere truth of His religion; feast you with the best feast, peace of conscience; and carry you through the good opinion and love of His saints in this world to the association of His saints, and angels, and one another, in the resurrection, and everlasting possession of that kingdom which His Son, our Saviour, Christ Jesus, hath purchased for us, with the inestimable price of His incorruptible blood." It was a beautiful prayer; and, had Miss Watt heard it on the day of her marriage, she would have said most fervently, Amen. In her Journal she prays, "Holy Father, give me grace that, in the highest sense, I may *be a good wife*. I pray that I may be industrious and cleanly, and still continue my habit of early rising. By Thy grace I will watch over my tongue; by Thy help I resolve never to answer my husband again improperly. If I should see him harassed and oppressed with care, I will try to soothe and comfort him as best I can."

Such was the spirit in which she entered upon her married life. No wonder that it proved a

happy one. As in the majority of cases, there were diversities of opinion between her and her husband on some points; but, for twenty-two years, their union was, as one of the members of the family expresses it, "singularly felicitous;" and in her the character of the virtuous woman, as described in the Book of Proverbs, was displayed, so that "her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." (Prov. xxxi. 28.)

A few months after their marriage, Mr. and Mrs. Bairstow removed to Tranmere, partly for the benefit of Mrs. Bairstow's health. As compared with Liverpool it was a lovely spot; and she says in her Journal of April 1st, 1841, "During the fifteen years I have been in Liverpool, I have been like a pent-up bird; but I have just now been peeping at some of the seeds which have just burst from the earth. O Father, how happy I am! It is true my house, at present, is but a cottage, until a larger one is at liberty; but I have a neat parlour, a kitchen, a scullery, three comfortable bedrooms, and a beautiful piece of ground, which we intend to cultivate. The surrounding landscape is magnificent. At the back is Oxton, with all its beautiful fields. Between Oxton and my house

is 'the happy valley,' which will soon be covered with primroses ; and then, in front is the river Mersey, studded with splendid vessels passing to and fro. O, how I love to watch them ! But, O my Father, I am not going to perch on the top of this beautiful tree, and say, 'Soul, take thine ease.' When I am a little stronger, I intend that every hour of my life shall be spent for Thy glory. The inhabitants of this locality are exceedingly wicked,—guilty of the foulest crimes ; and one of them has just been transported. Teach me, O Jesus, to lay my plans wisely, and then give me grace to work for Thee."

When talent and piety are combined, they cannot long be hidden from the Church, in whatever locality they dwell. Mrs. Bairstow joined a Dorcas society at Tranmere, which was composed of a number of highly intelligent and influential ladies. At the first meeting she attended, her disposition was to retire into a corner where she could see what passed and yet be unobserved. The result shall be told in her own words. "My dear friend, Mrs. D——, sat next to me, and is always able to keep up a conversation. The Life of Mrs. Hannah More was commenced that afternoon, and her zeal for God

touched me most powerfully. While the gentle form of the excellent lady at our head was gliding up and down the room, whispering first to one and then to another, 'Ladies, do your work neatly; remember we must be an example to the poor,' none but my heavenly Father knows what were the workings of my mind. Whilst lost in thought, I heard my name mentioned. Mrs. Radcliffe handed me the hymn-book, and then said, 'Now, ladies, please lay down your work, and Mrs. Bairstow will give out a hymn and pray with us.' I begged to be excused, feeling myself quite unable to comply. I could have done it unhesitatingly in a company of uneducated persons; but to open my mouth in prayer before some of the most intelligent of the society seemed impossible, and I implored Mrs. Radcliffe to pass the book to some one else. She smilingly said, 'God will help you;' and, a hymn having been sung, I knelt down with a palpitating heart and trembling limbs, having not one idea in my mind. But no sooner had I taken up my cross than my mouth was filled with arguments, and my soul uplifted like a bird set free from its cage. I rose and rose until I was entirely delivered from fear, and the King held out to me His golden sceptre. I pleaded

the wants of our admirable society ; and then asked for a baptism of the Holy Spirit on each lady, that, with primitive simplicity, she might learn to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. And now the power descended upon every corner of the room ; and bursts of deep feeling bespoke the presence of my Lord. Accept my humble thanks, O Lord, for this manifestation of Thy goodness, and help me always to take up my cross for Jesu's sake. Amen."

The cross, when taken up in this way, is as much a glory as a burden. A burden or a glory it will prove to every one. A burden to him who is compelled to bear it, as was Simon ; a glory to him who takes it up, as did St. Paul ; for, as Thomas à Kempis says, "If thou bear the cross willingly, it will bear thee ; and when it becomes a glory, it almost ceases to be a burden."

The Cross, it takes our guilt away,
It holds the fainting spirit up ;
It cheers with hope the gloomy day,
And sweetens every bitter cup.

This Mrs. Bairstow proved, both in the instance thus given, and on many other occasions ; and, emboldened by the recollection, she went on her

way trying to do good, and but little daunted by the fear of man.

Induced by a desire to benefit others, Mr. Bairstow began to preach on the rocks; and the novelty of the thing brought together a large number of hearers. Among them was a number of boys who spent their Sabbaths in sin and folly. The Word reached some of their hearts; and a short time after, several of them frequented a night school, to which reference will be made hereafter.

On the 30th of March, 1842, Mrs. Bairstow became a mother; and in her diary is the following entry. "The Lord has given an immortal spirit into my hands to train for heaven. Father, Thy gift is a precious one. Like a young mother I feel very proud of my little chubby, light-haired baby. As soon as she was born, her father knelt by my bedside, and thanked God for the dear little stranger; and gave her back to Him, fervently dedicating her to His service."

Her new responsibilities did not prevent Mrs. Bairstow from prosecuting her labours for the good of others. The school was prospering; but in consequence of the annual wakes which were held in the neighbourhood, the moral

influence of it was in danger of being counter-acted. Several of the girls went and loitered in Vanity Fair to their great spiritual loss; and Mrs. Bairstow grieved to see that they were placing themselves in the way of temptation, and were in great danger of being led astray. She therefore sallied forth in quest of them, met one here and another there, spoke to each one in her gentlest and most persuasive tones, and induced them to retire from such scenes of dissipation. Ultimately the wakes were given up, and they have never since been resumed in that locality.

Thus was Tranmere benefitted by the zeal and devotedness of this Christian woman. Yet there was no show, no ostentation, no display in anything that she did. Hers was a quiet mode of doing good; and the most powerful influence she ever wielded was that of her gentle winning spirit, which insinuated itself into the hearts of others, and drew them to the Saviour as by the cords of love. Perhaps the largest amount of real good effected by Christians is effected in this way,—by their silent influence,—by the influence of their character, their deportment, their temperament and disposition. For it is certain that whatever active

exertions we may put forth for the benefit of mankind, such exertions will be powerless unless the tone and temper of our minds correspond with them ; whilst, on the other hand, it is possible, with very little *manifest* activity, to lay hold upon others and draw them to the cross of Christ by a power which character will give us, almost unconsciously to ourselves. Yes ; ye Christian females whose lot it is to occupy comparatively retired positions in society and in the Church, rather than to stand forth in those that are prominent and conspicuous, you may nevertheless exert an influence for good, of the most powerful nature. In the family circle, in the retired class-room, in the quiet village, you may be like plants which exhale the most delicious perfumes, though they are never heard, and sometimes scarcely seen. With little noise, and with no display, you may go quietly to work ; and by the force of your example, and the gentleness of your spirit, you may win many a heart to Christ, and save many a soul from death. It is in this way, chiefly, that the majority of Christians are to be the lights of the world,—not by making efforts to shine, but rather by keeping the light burning, and simply letting it shine, which it will do,

so silently and yet so powerfully, that it will, perhaps, startle no one, and yet will affect every one who comes within its sphere.

But what is the secret of this silent influence? It is personal piety, personal holiness, personal fellowship with God in Christ. Those who are strangers to religion exert a silent influence, but it is for evil and not for good. None can exert the best kind of influence on others, but they whose own spirits are in daily contact with the great Fountain of light and of life. We benefit our fellow-creatures in spiritual things in proportion to the measure of the spiritual gifts which we ourselves receive. And the great Fountain of light and of life is ever accessible to us. Earthly kings have stated seasons at which to grant an audience to their subjects; but the court of heaven is ever open, and the King is ever on His throne, stretching forth the sceptre of His grace to all who are anxious to ask any favour at His hands. We may, therefore, ever be replenishing the gifts we have received, and ever gaining more of that spiritual power which will fit us for the spheres we are called upon to occupy. Let us have confidence in the efficacy of prayer; and let us avail ourselves of it constantly, that we may

refresh our spirit in its transparent air. Dr. Goulburn truly says that "prayer is the act of spiritual respiration." Whilst engaged in it we are helped, as it were, into a purer atmosphere than that in which we generally breathe; and getting out of the smoke and fog that so often settles all around us, we live among the mountains, where the sweetest air of heaven is inhaled, and "the energies of the soul, which human infirmity has caused to flag, are wonderfully recruited," and our spiritual health becomes so vigorous that it is a joy to live and act.



CHAPTER V.

Bread upon the Waters.

CHRISTIAN EARNESTNESS IS WISE AND THOUGHTFUL IN THE APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE, IN THE JUDGMENT OF PERSONS, EVENTS, TIMES, AND SEASONS ; AND, WHILE IT SEEKS ITS ENDS WITH GREAT STEADINESS, IT DOES NOT RUSH ON THEM BLINDLY, AND AT ALL RISKS.

A. RALEIGH.

THY Word, O Lord, like gentle dew,
Falls soft on hearts that pine ;
Lord, to Thy garden ne'er refuse
This heavenly balm of Thine.

Water'd from Thee,

Let every tree

Bud forth and blossom to Thy praise,
And bear much fruit in after days.

LYRA GERMANICA.

CHAPTER V.

Bread upon the Waters.

“**E**AST thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.” (Eccles. xi. 1.) In ships of commerce men are accustomed to embark a large portion of their property; but, in the end, it comes back to them with abundant interest. Or they are wont, as on the waters of the Nile, to sow their seed, which for a time appears as if it were lost; yet, ere long, springs up from the loamy soil, in rich and plenteous harvests.

But the promise is more certain in the spiritual world than in the natural. Sow beside all waters the seeds of eternal truth; scatter with a liberal hand the blessings of Divine grace you have received yourself; and, ultimately, though it be after many days, you will find that your labours have not been lost, but that they have been productive of considerable results. Workers in the garden of the Lord often become impatient, thinking that the produce of the seed

they have sown is long in making its appearance; but there are some kinds of seed which, though apparently lost for years, will spring up at length, and blossom and bear fruit abundantly. Be not over anxious.

'T is by defeat we conquer,
Grow rich by growing poor ;
And from our largest givings
We draw our fullest store.

Then let the blossoms perish,
And let the fragrance go ;
All the surer and the larger
Is the harvest we shall know.

All the sweeter and the louder
Our song of harvest-home,
When earth's ripe autumn smileth,
And the reaping day has come.

Mr. and Mrs. Bairstow having taken a more commodious house, in a beautiful situation, a gentleman who was an invalid was very anxious to become a temporary resident under their roof. His family were influential Wesleyans ; but he and his brother were gay and thoughtless, and did not much relish the atmosphere of prayer and praise. They both lodged for a while with

the family ; but the devotional exercises which were daily observed had no charms for them ; nor did they breathe freely in a home where worldly practices were disallowed. They accordingly left in the course of a few weeks, and Mr. and Mrs. Bairstow heard no more of them for a considerable time. Eleven years afterwards, Mr. and Mrs. Bairstow were on a visit in Cheshire ; and, on entering a Methodist chapel, were somewhat struck with the appearance of the preacher, whom they thought they had previously seen, though when and where they could not remember. At the close of the service, he and another gentleman were introduced to them by a friend. "Do you not recognise me?" he said ; and then the fact came out that he had resided under their roof ; and, said he, "There the arrows of conviction pierced my soul ; and, though I left you, I could not get rid of my impressions ; I sought and found mercy through Christ, and now it is my delight to preach Him to others."

In her Journal of February 29th, 184-, Mrs. Bairstow writes :—"My son James was born just three weeks since. To-day, a professed friend called to inquire after my health, and said, very sarcastically, 'Will you attend the

meetings now as you have done before? I should think you will be getting too proud of your children to pay so much attention to others. How will you do in the lovefeast now?' with many similar remarks. My head was distracted with pain; and, though her words were softer than oil, I felt them as drawn swords. O, how much I dislike sarcasm! I know that the only object of her visit was to ascertain my future plans; but, when she left me, I laid my boy in bed, and then opened my full soul to that God who knew all my intentions, promising that additional gifts should not prevent me labouring in His cause. Then did He sweetly whisper, 'Them that honour Me I will honour;' and, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' "

It is indeed a pitiable thing for professing Christians to resort to weapons such as these. Sarcasm may perhaps be legitimately employed against hypocrisy and mere pretence; but to use it purposely to give pain, and that, too, when it is not deserved, is cowardly and mean. The prophet Elijah was ironical in his controversy with the priests of Baal, and Isaiah sanctioned the use of irony by his terrible invective against idolatry; but such a weapon must be used lawfully, not to wound even an enemy

wantonly, much less to inflict pain upon a friend. I, too, dislike sarcasm; and I think that for a Christian to employ it in Christian society is a breach of etiquette, and what is much more than that, a violation of the New Testament precept, which says, "Be kindly affectioned one to another." (Rom. xii. 10.)

The following extract from Mrs. Bairstow's journal is illustrative of the kind providence which was shed over her. "What a mercy I am in the land of the living! Yesterday the devil seemed to be let loose in the village; for in the afternoon, as my girls were dismissed, a number of wicked boys chased them across the fields, declaring that if they came to my school they would kill them. But he who goeth about as a roaring lion suggested that a readier plan would be to kill their teacher. It is my practice to return to my baby as soon as preaching is over. There are no lamps in the village, and last night fifty boys armed with stones hid themselves behind the garden walk, adjoining the shrubbery, intending to stone me when I reached a certain place. But, just as they began to move, a drunken man who had been asleep, but was recovering from the effects of his opiate, hearing the rustle of their movements, awoke and

stood up. They imagined that it was the constable of the parish, and that he was there in order to bring them to justice. Coward-like, they instantly darted off across the fields, and I reached home in safety. I found my servant much alarmed. Several squares of glass had been broken, and two of my scholars had called and said that they had been chased by these mischievous boys."

Of her real danger, on this occasion, Mrs. Bairstow was not aware at the time; but, strangely enough, some of these boys afterwards became the subject of the grace of God, when they confessed that they were accomplices in this wicked plot.

Religious worship was held at this time in a neat thatched cottage; but, ere long, the family refused to lend it for the purpose any more. Under these circumstances a few of the friends resolved to have preaching in the open air; but only one service was held there; for a large house was offered to Mrs. Bairstow on very reasonable terms, and was taken with the understanding that a portion of it was to be appropriated to the service of a sanctuary. The next Lord's day the little band of worshippers met in the gig-house, where they continued to

assemble until certain alterations in the dwelling were completed. They then assembled, Sabbath after Sabbath, in the large hall, and when the congregation filled it, the doors of the breakfast and the dining-rooms were also thrown open, and facilities were thus afforded for many to hear the word of life.

As the class met in the afternoon of the Sabbath, and the house was thus occupied all the day, it was necessary to remove the children of the school to another place. The only eligible one that could be obtained was a cottage at Rock-Ferry, and here the little ones used to sit on a large mangle learning their letters, whilst the elder ones occupied the floor. Such was the influence of the instruction given to these children that their mothers asked permission to come; and soon the house was filled to overflowing. Then several of the fathers came, and listened; and, sons of toil as they were, they were pointed to the Lamb of God, and became partakers of the great spiritual change.

The work thus begun had not been formally placed under the direction of the Church, and at a Leaders' Meeting some inquiries were made respecting it. The Rev. A. E. Farrar was at that time the superintendent of the

Circuit, and on a visit to Tranmere, to give tickets to the members, he made himself acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, and was so satisfied with what had been done, that he formed a class, and appointed Mrs. Bairstow the leader; and from that day the work in which she was engaged was duly recognised by the Church to the gratification of all concerned.

A young man of high respectability connected with the Established Church, but a stranger to personal religion, had become an inmate of Mr. Bairstow's house; and one evening he asked permission to remain in the room whilst Mrs. Bairstow conducted family prayer. He was affected even to tears, and that night, as was afterwards ascertained, he became a new creature in Christ Jesus. He had previously trusted in his morality, now he saw that it was but filthy rags. He had placed dependence in the mere forms of religion, now he felt that they were empty and vain. He had been a regular attendant at church, what should he do now? and where should he go for Christian instruction and help? He went to an excellent clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Knox, of Birkenhead, and having told him of his conversion, asked for his advice.

Mr. Knox was not one of those High Churchmen, of whom there are now so many, that boast of their apostolic succession, and deem all Dissenters schismatics. He held more scriptural views, and therefore did not hesitate to recommend this young man to join the Methodists, and endeavour to do all the good among them he could. The young man did so, and became a valuable auxiliary to the cause; but in a short time died, and joined the white-robed saints before the throne of God. In the same catholic spirit Mr. Knox sent to Mrs. Bairstow's school eighteen Bibles, as rewards for those children who had committed to memory certain portions of Holy Scripture; an act which was highly appreciated both by her and by the scholars. She sought not the praise of men; but to know that her efforts to do good were approved by a minister of Christ belonging to another section of the Christian Church, was a great encouragement to her to persevere in the work she had begun.

Mrs. Bairstow became exceedingly anxious to extend the operations of the school, but no more scholars could be received until a larger school-room was obtained. There was a room in Tranmere which had been used for a similar

purpose ; but the school had been given up, and it was now in a very dilapidated state. Could it be obtained? she asked. It was in the hands of the parish authorities of Tranmere ; and whether they would grant the use of it was doubtful. But she resolved to wait upon the clergyman, and with much trepidation and fear she went, feeling almost certain that her request would be refused. Contrary to her expectations he received her kindly, eulogized her efforts, and promised her his influence and aid. Shortly after, a message was sent to the effect that the room was to be put into suitable repair, and was then to be granted temporarily for the use of the school she had established.

In a few weeks it was ready ; and in connexion with the opening, a tea-meeting was held, at which the Rev. A. E. Farrar presided. The children were regaled with buns and coffee, and the elder ones were presented with Bibles or Testaments. At the meeting Mr. and Mrs. Bairstow were requested to give an account of the manner in which the work began, and the unvarnished statement interested all present. With a view to the erection of a chapel, a committee was formed, and subscriptions promised ; and a site having been obtained, the foundation-

stone of the building was laid by the Rev. Joseph Beaumont, and in due time the edifice was completed, and dedicated to the worship of Almighty God.

It is not in praise of this excellent lady, that these facts are stated ; but to magnify the grace of God as it manifested itself in her, and to show how simple, well-directed efforts to do good are crowned with considerable success. Mrs. Bairstow was not possessed of any very extraordinary talents, but she loved Christ with an intense affection, and the souls of her fellow-creatures for His sake. This was the secret of her persevering toil. It was her highest joy to lead sinners to the cross ; and especially to direct the feet of the young into the paths of righteousness and truth. To selfish motives she was an utter stranger. Her eye was single, and her whole body was full of light.

In visitations of the sick she was most unwearied, and many were the instances in which fruit appeared. She was requested one day to go and see a young person who was wasting away in consumption, and was in considerable distress for her soul. She hastened to obey the summons, and on her arrival found that the invalid had been enabled, whilst walking in

the garden, to rest on Jesus as having "died for her as much as for the Sovereign of the realm." But her brother was also suffering from the same disease, and had not found the pearl of great price. Mrs. Bairstow directed him to the cross, and one day, after the death of his sister, he sent the hymn-book to Mrs. Bairstow, who was confined at home by domestic affliction, with a scarlet thread inserted in page 650, telling her that the hymn was expressive of his hopes. Soon after this the young man died in the triumph of faith, and joined his sister in the skies.

One of Mrs. Bairstow's servants became exceedingly anxious concerning the spiritual state of her family, and begged her mistress to go and visit her benighted home. She went, and found the house filled with persons belonging to a neighbourhood in which there was not a solitary Christian to be found. She read and prayed with them; and the next Sabbath the house was opened for Divine worship. It was soon too small to contain those who flocked to it; and another house was taken, and formed into a little chapel, at the dedication of which Mrs. Bairstow herself took part, at the urgent request of those who had been gathered into the Church.

Her third child was born, and was solemnly dedicated to God, in Tranmere chapel, by the Rev. G. Osborn. The child was named Mary Elizabeth; and Mr., now Dr., Osborn dwelt, in a very felicitous manner, on the meaning of the two names,—Mary signifying, “bitterness,” or, “sorrow;” Elizabeth, “God’s oath;”—and so deeply were the parents affected by his remarks that they were never forgotten. But the child was feeble; and, after a brief life of six years, was taken from a world of sorrow to a world where sorrow is unknown.

After the erection of the chapel, Mr. and Mrs. Bairstow opened their house for a week-night school, which met in the kitchen two evenings in the week,—on Monday evenings for boys, and on Tuesday evenings for girls. There were several disorderly girls in the neighbourhood who refused to attend the school, and who were in the habit of throwing stones into the garden, and of knocking at the door, and then running away. One evening they were too slow in their retreat, and, having been caught, they might have been prosecuted; but kindness often does more than severity, and, on being reasoned with and admonished, they were won over to a better mind, and became themselves scholars in the school.

An orchard was robbed not far distant, and some of the boys who attended this night-school were suspected of being the thieves. The owner somewhat unjustly thought Mr. Bairstow was responsible, because the lads were partially under his care; and, accordingly, complained to Mr. Bairstow of their conduct. The following evening on which the school assembled, it was opened as usual with singing and prayer, and a suitable lesson was read, on which some remarks were made respecting honesty; after which the eighth commandment was read and explained. "And now, boys," said the Superintendent, "an orchard has been robbed: which of you have done it?" "We have," said the culprits, unable to silence the voice of conscience; and their confession was followed by tears of penitence. At the suggestion of Mrs. Bairstow, and with the earnest desire of the lads, Mr. Bairstow took them to the owner of the orchard; they repeated their confession, and expressed their sorrow; and then, instead of being sent to jail, perhaps to their future ruin, they were freely forgiven, nor was the orchard ever robbed by them again. Nay, more; several of these boys became truly converted, and afterwards occupied very honourable positions in the

Church. Had harsh measures been adopted towards them, they would probably have become confirmed in crime; and society would have suffered through their sins and depredations. Prevention is always better than cure; and the cure of sin is more easily effected in the early stages of it than afterwards.

A Missionary Society was now formed; and the villages around were formed into districts, and collectors appointed to solicit subscriptions. Mrs. Bairstow was sanguine of success, and pledged her word that they would raise £2 in the year. The subscriptions realized but £1, for most of the people were very poor; but Mrs. Bairstow gave the other herself, out of her own comparatively scanty means. To her surprise and gratitude, it was, as she said, returned to her with interest in the course of a few days, by some friend, who knew nothing of the case, sending her a present of twenty-three pounds of tea. How often does God make up to His people the sacrifices they lay upon His altar! "The gold and the silver are His, and the cattle upon a thousand hills;" and many are the ways in which He can return to us what we lay out for Him.

Soon after the chapel at Tranmere was com-

pleted, many villas and detached dwellings, of a superior style of architecture, were erected in the neighbourhood; and one of these was taken by Mr. and Mrs. Thompson, a gentleman and lady somewhat advanced in years. In Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Bairstow found a spirit congenial with her own. They became band-mates, and met, alternately, in each other's houses for fellowship and prayer. They also visited the sick together; and when any case of remarkable spiritual need had been met with, they unitedly placed it at the throne of grace. They were pleading in this way on one occasion for a person respecting whom they both felt anxious, when a knock came to the door, and a message was brought them, that this very person had just entered into the liberty of the children of God.

Of Mrs. Thompson, the Rev. E. Nye, her son-in-law, says in a letter with which he has favoured me:—"Her active life was full of incident, beautifully illustrating the providence of God, the power of prayer, and the influence of personal appeals on the subject of the soul's salvation. Her faith in God was unwavering; her trust in Christ Jesus as her Saviour unhesitating; her labours among the rich and poor,

cheerful, constant, and self-denying ; and she was privileged to win many souls to her Lord." For five years she and Mrs. Bairstow laboured harmoniously together ; and then she expired in the arms of her friend, and her gentle spirit took flight to the realms of immortality and bliss.

How rapturous must be the meeting of such kindred spirits in the heavenly world ! For who can doubt that there will be recognitions and re-unions in the better land ? Christian friendships are not formed for time, but for eternity.

" Strong as the death it masters is the hope
That onward looks to immortality :
Let the frame perish, so the soul survive,
Pure, spiritual, and loving. I believe
The grave exalts, not separates, the ties
That hold us in affection to our kind.
I will look down from yonder pitying sky,
Watching and waiting those I loved on earth,
Anxious in heaven, until they, too, are there."

And, O, when those who have been associated on earth in works of charity and in acts of praise meet before the throne, recollections of the past will surely fill them with ecstatic joy, and will enhance the bliss of which they have become possessed.



CHAPTER VI.

Life a Pilgrimage.

IF THIS PILGRIMAGE WERE ALL THE WAY A WAY OF EASE,
THEN WE SHOULD NOT MUCH DESIRE TO HASTEN ON
IN IT, OR TO COME TO THE END OF IT, OR TO SEE GOD
IN HEAVEN; TOO MUCH SATISFIED WITH THE SWEET-
NESS OF THE STREAMS, WE SHOULD STAY AWAY FROM
THE FOUNTAIN.

CHEEVER.

EARTH 's but a sorry tent,
Pitch'd for a few frail days,
A short leased tenement;
Heaven 's still my song, my praise.
O, happy place !
When shall I be,
My God, with Thee,
To see Thy face ?

* * * * *

Jerusalem on high
My song and city is,
My home whene'er I die,
The centre of my bliss.
O, happy place !
When shall I be,
My God, with Thee,
To see Thy face ?

SAMUEL CROSSMAN, 1664.

CHAPTER VI.

Life a Pilgrimage.

IT is the lot of some, even in this changeable world, to be born, to live, and to die, in the same locality, and even under the same roof.

We have met with aged persons who had never been far away from the place that gave them birth, and who, after a short absence, were glad to return to it again, hoping that there they would end their days, and that they would be buried by the side of their fathers in the old churchyard.

But it is the lot of others to lead a kind of pilgrim-life,—to pitch their tents here or there for a time, and then to be compelled to strike them again, and, like the patriarch Abraham, to go and dwell in a spot, to them, comparatively strange. “Here we have no continuing city,” is true in more respects than one; for we can neither call this earth our home, nor can we say respecting any place in it, “This shall be our permanent abode, and in this nest we will live

and die." Many have indeed said of the dwellings they erected, "We will abide here;" but God has stirred up their nest, and compelled them to leave it and to seek another; and, in the end, each one's pilgrimage comes to a close, and he hears a voice saying to him, "Arise, and depart, for this is not thy rest." But what then, if our prospects are clear beyond the grave?

We journey through a vale of tears,
By many a cloud o'ercast,
And worldly cares and worldly fears
Go with us to the last!
Not to the last, Thy word hath said,
Could we but read aright;
Poor pilgrim! lift, in hope, thy head,
At eve there shall be light.

Mr. Bairstow had for some years occupied a situation in the "Customs;" but he now gave it up, with the view of joining a brother in the woollen trade in Halifax. The family must therefore leave Tranmere,—Tranmere, where Mrs. Bairstow had been made so great a blessing to many, and which had become endeared to her by many tender and loving associations. A beloved friend wrote to her, some time before she left, a letter, which I shall

insert in part, as illustrative of the genial influence of her Christian life :—

“ I often think how wonderfully the Lord sent you on that Sunday night when my mother died. I had not the most distant idea that she was so near death ; and when you came in and asked if I was prepared to part with her, and that if a change took place we must send for you, I replied, ‘ I do not expect any change ; for she often rallies after being feeble for a day or two.’ But of your own accord you came. We stood by her bedside, her breathing altered, and whilst we were there her spirit fled. How shocked should I have been, had you not been sent to prepare me for the stroke !

“ And then, when my dear father was on his death-bed, though you did not know it, you and your husband—I shall never forget that night—came and knelt by his bedside, and with a subdued voice sang, on your knees,

Happy, if with my latest breath
I may but gasp His name :

and his fine bass voice, now trembling in death, touched the notes here and there, as he was able to utter them. He was dying all that night, Friday ; but the silver cord was not broken until the Sunday following.

“And then, again, in November, 1859, you knew not why you left home without your servant; but, as if impelled by a supernatural power, you came, saying to yourself, ‘Well, perhaps I shall see the reason why;’ and when, on entering the hall, I told you our poor Letitia was dying, you were quite struck, and said, ‘Now I see the reason why I am come.’ We went up stairs, and when the child saw you, she said, ‘O, I have been praying for a week for Mrs. Bairstow to come, and now the Lord has answered my prayer. I wanted Mrs. Bairstow’s faith. She came to see grandpapa die, and now she has come to see me die.’”

This is but one of many instances in which the timely visits of Mrs. Bairstow to the sick and dying were so valuable and precious. Can we wonder that her removal from Tranmere was a cause of grief to many? Nothing touches human hearts so much as kindness; and the poor, especially, are susceptible of deep emotions relative to those who have been their friends in sorrow. When Dorcas lay dead in the upper chamber at Lydda, “the widows stood by Peter weeping, and showing the coats and garments which she made whilst she was with them;” (Acts ix. 39;) and the scene at

parting with Mrs. Bairstow at Tranmere was similarly affecting; for the friends who had worked with her, and many of the people who had been benefitted by her labours, came to bid her and her family adieu, and followed them to the river's brink, watching, with tearful eyes, the vessel that was to bear her from their sight.

If Christians would leave behind them, either on their removal from one locality to another, or on their final departure from their earthly home, a fragrance which shall long be felt, and shall prevent their name from being forgotten amongst men, they must live, not unto themselves, but for the good of others;—must be kind to the sick and charitable to the poor, must visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and must exemplify the truth of their religion by a holy walk and conversation. And where is the locality in which one possessed of the self-denying spirit of Christ, may not be of service to some of his fellow-creatures? In the crowded city, and in the most retired hamlet, there is work to be done for our great Master; and wherever our lot may, for the time being, be cast, it should be our business and our aim there to do as much good for others as we can.

Mr. and Mrs. Bairstow's removal to Halifax

took place in the year 1850. They had not been long in their new home, ere their third child, Mary Elizabeth, before mentioned, was taken from them; a loss which was felt the more, in consequence of the changes through which they had recently passed. But they knew, as all Christian parents know, that Jesus said concerning little children, "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" and that, therefore, Heaven receives them when they die, and that their disembodied spirits enter then upon a life of blessedness which knows no end.

The Methodist Church in Halifax was passing at this time through seas of sorrow; and, as helpers were greatly needed, Mrs. Bairstow's arrival was hailed with pleasure, and she was requested to take charge of a class which had been nearly broken up by the agitations that had taken place. She entered upon the task with her accustomed zeal and earnestness, though not, considering the circumstances of the case, without anxiety as to the issue. Her efforts were crowned with much success; and she had again the pleasure of gathering around her, from week to week, a number of persons with whom she could hold fellowship in the spirit. Again, however, she had to strike her tent, the

cloud of Divine Providence pointing to Huddersfield as the abode of her family, whither they removed in the year 1854. A farewell meeting was held by the class, when a beautiful Bible and Hymn-book were presented to her by the Rev. James Carr, on behalf of the members, and as a token of their gratitude and love.

Several letters from members of the Halifax class, which followed Mrs. Bairstow to Huddersfield, now lie before me. They breathe the spirit of affectionate regard, and testify to the usefulness of Mrs. Bairstow in that department of Christian labour. A very strong attachment to her had been formed by many, and when she was no longer with them, they remembered her counsels, and thought of her example; and thus the seed she scattered produced its precious fruit to the praise and glory of that Saviour whom she loved.

It is often the case that a truly pious class-leader in the Methodist Church produces effects on the minds of others almost as powerful as those produced by the Christian minister. The class-meeting is not a confessional, yet it brings the leader and the members into such close contact, that, by and by, they learn to read each other's looks, and their hearts beat towards

one another with emotions of the tenderest kind. They are truly *en rapport* with each other; and if ever human spirits touch one another, it is then, in the little circle of believers met together for mutual prayer, encouragement, and help.

But, for this very reason, the office is one which should never be entrusted to a novice in experience, nor to one who cannot enter into, and sympathize with, the sorrows and the griefs of others. It needs a tender heart to be a successful leader of a class; and, perhaps, one reason why so many Christian females are efficient helpers in this work is, that their susceptibilities are so keen, and their powers of discernment so quick and ready. We thank God for such agents, and we ever pray that their number may be largely multiplied.

On their arrival in Huddersfield, Mr. and Mrs. Bairstow connected themselves with the congregation and church worshipping in Buxton Road chapel; and here Mrs. Bairstow soon found a circle of friends whose hearts beat in unison with her own; and a field of labour was again open to her, suitable to her piety and gifts. The changes and trials through which she had passed had neither shaken her faith in

God, nor damped the ardour of her zeal; for she was as willing as ever to work in any way she could to promote the welfare of those around her.

A new class was formed, which soon became large and deeply interesting. She met it at first in her own nursery; but when it numbered from twenty-six to thirty members, it was removed to one of the vestries of Buxton Road chapel. Nor did she content herself with meeting the class, but she visited the sick and absent members; and when any of them removed to some other locality, she wrote to them in the most affectionate manner, giving them counsel and encouragement in their new spheres of life.

To one who had married in the Lord she wrote as follows.

“MY DEAR MRS. R.,

“MYSELF, husband, family, and class, when we received your cards, were deeply interested in your wedding. Yesterday I was stopped by numerous inquiries, asking me, ‘Is Mr. R—— a Christian and a Methodist?’ and I was proud that I could answer in the affirmative. I exclaimed, ‘She was an example to you

in the school, and an example in the class, and now she is an example to you in her marriage.And now, my dear, you have taken one of the most important steps in life. You will have, I know, the best advice from your discreet parents ; and, therefore, anything that I can say may seem superfluous. But you have a very warm place in my heart, and I must intrude a few remarks. Allow me, then, in the first place, to beg of you to cling close to Christ, whether you are prosperous in the world or not. In the second place, honour your husband as your head. Never speak angrily to him nor cross him. Be not too anxious to make a great show in the beginning. Cultivate habits of cleanliness, order, and carefulness. Do not be afraid of a patched garment. When your Abraham goes out to rough it in the world, and to provide for his family, let his Sarah stay at home, and take care of the tent. Never tell your husband's faults to any one but God ; and never hide any secret from him. Your single life has been unspotted ; let your married life be unsullied. Never conceal your troubles from your husband, and train him to unburden his mind to you. Wishes and blessings I would heap in abundance, both on bride and bride-

groom, but that I must do when I am shut up with God in my closet.....

“ Your devoted leader,

“ H. BAIRSTOW.”

This was sound and excellent advice ; and I would commend it to the attention of all young people who have entered on the married life. Mrs. Bairstow always cautioned her young friends against marrying unbelievers ; for she had doubtless seen, as many have, the sad results which so often follow. “ For how can two walk together unless they be agreed ? ” Most perilous is it to the piety, and therefore to the happiness, of that young person who allies herself in bonds so sacred to one who is destitute of true religion ; nor can rank, or fortune, or titles, make up to her the loss she must thus experience.

To the same friend Mrs. Bairstow wrote again from Southport, whither she had gone for the benefit of her health :—

“ Your precious letter has just come to cheer my heart. I have been watching the sun go down in the western sky. I was alone and

pensive, but filled with delightful musings, just as the postman came up the garden. I little dreamed he was bringing news from one I so dearly loved. I need not say how often I have thought of you as a youthful bride, just stepping on the stage of married life. There will be many a thorn and brier for you here, before, like myself, you have been twenty-one years a wife; but you have begun right, and I believe you will end right. I am proud to find that God has given you such a suitable partner, and I shall be very glad to make his acquaintance. I need not trouble you with an account of my sickness, as Mrs. Booth has already done that. Suffice it to say, that I am somewhat improved. Many a time has that sweet text seemed like a rainbow of promise to me: 'And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.' This affliction seems mysterious, Providence taking me away from my active duties. You will have heard that I have formed an Anti-Tobacco Society. I could write much on this subject, but weakness forbids me. I have been reproached by many cold professors for labouring so much, and some have even said I was committing suicide: but in this I

glory ; for, believe me, those who labour for God will be ranked among the aristocracy of heaven.

“H. BAIRSTOW.”

That some should think her labours too severe is not surprising ; for whilst she never neglected her domestic duties, and was most diligent in attending to the interests of her class, she also went about amongst the sick and poor, amongst the fallen and the depraved, seeking to administer consolation to the one, and to restore the other to the paths of virtue and of peace. The poorest outcast who sent for her, whether in the workhouse, or in the den of infamy and vice, —in early morn, or when the streets were well-nigh deserted at night,—she went off to see ; and if any one remonstrated with her, her reply would be, “To-morrow it may be too late.” And by her indefatigable efforts many in Huddersfield were led to Christ. She did not toil for nothing. God was with her, and blessed the advice she gave to the conversion of not a few. Her influence was that of an earnest Christian lady, than which few things are more powerful ; for it often finds its way even to the most obdurate and unfeeling hearts, and on hearts

that are sorrowful and distressed it drops as a healing balm.

That such devoted females should be raised up in the Church from time to time is surely a matter of thankfulness to God ; for they can do what even ministers cannot,—they can gain access to persons of their own sex, which no one else can, and they can sympathize with sufferers of both sexes in the most tender and gentle way. Let them, then, be encouraged, by all means. Sisters of mercy in the truest sense of the term, let no one treat them rudely, or put upon them unnecessary checks. Our large towns and cities have need of thousands such ; and would that all our Churches would learn a lesson here from the Church of Rome, whose zeal in raising up, and in sending forth, her female agents among all classes of the community, is worthy of all praise. Methodism presents to Christian females a wide field of usefulness ; and we rejoice that there are so many in our ranks, both of married and unmarried, who are “in labours more abundant.” The names of but few of them are known : but their record is on high, and their reward will be great in heaven.

In that peace we reap in gladness
What was sown in tearful showers ;
There the fruit of all our sadness
Ripens,—there the palm is ours ;
There our God upon His throne
Is our full reward alone ;
They who all for God surrender
Bring their sheaves in heavenly splendour.

So sang another of the sweet poets of the land of Luther ; for the Christian conflict is the same everywhere, and in every age and place the same fears disturb, and the same hopes comfort, the heart of the believer in the Son of God. Christianity meets the universal want, and speaks to the universal soul, of man. And there is nothing else that does. O the restlessness and the disquietude of those who reject its teachings, and put away from them its precious promises ! They feed on husks, and live on empty air. But the Christian, whilst he has his perplexities, his sorrows, and his cares, and whilst there is much around him in the world which is mysterious, and which he is wholly unable to understand, is sustained by a principle of which he need not be ashamed—the hope of a bright and glorious future, where he will reap what he has sown in everlasting harvest of unfading bliss. “ In Thy presence is fulness of

joy, at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." There is joy on earth, but not the fulness of joy; for in the sweetest cup there is some bitter ingredient,—in the happiest lot there is a crook of some kind. But look up, Christian reader. If thy life is chequered now, and days of gloom and sunshine frequently alternate, there is a home for thee beyond, where thou wilt dwell in the unclouded light of thy Saviour's presence, and where thou wilt drink for ever of the river which makes glad the city of thy God.



CHAPTER VII.

The Sick Chamber.

SICKNESS IS, IN SOME SENSE, ELIGIBLE, BECAUSE IT IS THE OPPORTUNITY AND THE PROPER SCENE OF EXERCISING SOME VIRTUES. IT IS THAT AGONY IN WHICH MEN ARE TRIED FOR A CROWN.

BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR.

WHATE'ER my God ordains is right,
He taketh thought for me ;
The cup that my Physician gives
No poison'd draught can be ;
But medicine due,
For God is true ;
And on that changeless truth I build,
And all my heart with hope is fill'd.

Whate'er my God ordains is right :
Though I the cup must drink,
That bitter seems to my faint heart,
I will not fear nor shrink :
Tears pass away
With dawn of day ;
Sweet comfort yet shall fill my heart,
And pain and sorrow all depart.

S. RCD:GAST.

CHAPTER VII.

The Sick Chamber.

AFTER five years of almost incessant toil in the town of Huddersfield, Mrs. Bairstow was now called to lay aside the active duties of life, and to resign herself to passive suffering. In the spring of 1861 she took cold, which brought on inflammation of the lungs, and afterwards symptoms of that insidious disease, consumption, which, in our variable climate especially, carries off its victims in almost every stage of life.

It is difficult for a mind like hers to submit at once to so great a change, and for some time she felt deeply the trial to which she was now subject. But ere long she wrote to a friend in the following strain :—" At the commencement of my illness the furnace seemed very hot, and for two or three days, whilst disease took hold upon my frame, the growing wants of my family, and the deep depression of my husband,

bore down my spirits ; but, through faith in the blood of Jesus, my soul rose higher, and yet higher, till it scaled the mount of God, and left its burden at the feet of Christ. For several months I have enjoyed the peace that passeth understanding, and by the grace of God I have been resigned to die, or content to live. Mr. Thompson has repeatedly said to me that he did not think I should have ecstasies of joy, but that, whether in storm or in sunshine, my little bark would enter heaven ; but in addition to the light of the Spirit, and the love of the Father, I have been filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

To another friend she wrote :—

" My joy is that God knows the inmost recesses of my heart. You must only think of me as I am ; a most unworthy, weak, and helpless creature, longing to know more of the power of religion. Religion is not mere sentiment, not mere feeling, not mere doing. What is it? It must operate as a check, or it is nothing. O, that every thought and feeling of my soul were purified, restrained, and set right ! " To another she said :—

" Sometimes Jesus seems to introduce me into the very family of heaven. I fear, as I

gaze upon the holy throng, but He tells me they are all washed in His blood, and that He will make me meet for the same inheritance. I cannot describe to you the loathing I feel when I look at my own heart. Dear child, if through sin or ignorance I made any wrong impression on your mind,—for you were like clay, which a wise and holy leader might have moulded into any form,—forgive me. I know Christ is the Potter, but of course I was one of the instruments; but you must pardon all my unfaithfulness. A great many people think I shall never recover, but God has not yet given me light on the subject; and for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Mrs. Bairstow was a most devoted mother, and the prospect of leaving her seven children, just at an age when, as she herself said, "they most needed a mother's guidance and advice," was often painful to her in the extreme; but then she would say, "If God takes me, He can more than make up my loss;" and thus she committed all affairs, personal and domestic, into the hands of her Saviour, firmly believing that He would do all things well. Bishop Heber's hymn expressed, I doubt not, the deepest feelings of her breast; and perhaps some •

invalid, into whose hands these pages may fall,
will be glad to read it here.

When sickness to my fainting soul
His fearful form display'd,
I to my secret chamber stole,
And humbly thus I pray'd.

If, soften'd by the impending stroke,
My heart, O God, will yield,
In mercy Thy decree revoke,
And let my wound be heal'd.

But if from mercy's tablet soon
Ingratitude would bear
The bounteous Giver, and the boon,
O, hear not Thou the prayer !

Rather than bear that blackest stain
Upon my breast, I 'd brave
The keenest throes of restless pain,—
The horrors of the grave.

If health's unmerited return
Should bless my future days,
O, may I from Thy Spirit learn
A daily song of praise !

But, should I shortly hence depart,
Or, lingering, suffer still,
May that blest Spirit, Lord, impart
Submission to Thy will.

Her lot was to "linger, suffering still;" but submission was imparted, and for two long years, for long they doubtless seemed, she was the prisoner of the Lord. Sometimes she seemed to gain a little strength; but at length the hectic flush, and the emaciated form, gave some indications that her work was done.

During her sickness, Mrs. Bairstow dictated to her friend Mrs. Booth a narrative of her history, which was committed to paper, but not in the form of an autobiography, nor with any view to publication, but simply for the benefit and instruction of her children. From that and other documents, this memoir has been prepared; and we cannot think, that a life so full of incident, and withal, so useful and devoted, will be penned in vain. Doubtless there are many such lives that are never written, and perhaps the recital of them will be one of the employments of a brighter world; but that we need a few to encourage us in our journey through the present, no one will be disposed to doubt. The lives of such women as Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Susannah Wesley, Mrs. Judson, and Mrs. Newell, are like brilliant stars in our moral hemisphere; and if there are others of lesser magnitude, yet these too shed a light too beauti-

ful to be wholly unobserved, and too precious to be forgotten or despised.

The members of her class still lay very near to Mrs. Bairstow's heart; and to them she addressed a letter, which I here insert as a very precious legacy, from one of ripened Christian experience, on the verge of the spirit world.

“MY BELOVED CLASS,

“I have often had a strong desire to write to you, but have not had the courage to do so. Last Sunday evening your kind leader called to see me. He thought it my duty to write at once. I promised to comply with his request; and as, to all human appearances, I shall not get any stronger, I embrace the first opportunity to fulfil my promise.

“As I approach the land of realities, the shadows of earth cease to interest or mislead me,—the films are removed from my eyes,—objects are stripped of their false lustre,—nothing that is really little any longer looks great. The mists of vanity are dispersed, and everything that has an end appears small,—appears nothing. Eternal things assume their proper magnitude, for I behold them from the true point of vision. I cease to lean on the world,

for I have found it both a reed and a spear. I lean not on myself, for I know my own weakness; but I know in whom I have trusted, and therefore I have nothing to fear. I look up with holy, but humble, confidence to God, who by His rod has corrected and by His staff supported me, and will, in the end, conduct me to His rest.

“For *you*, I have always felt the deepest interest. You will remember better than myself how long we have known each other, and how many happy seasons we have had together.Many times, when I have entered my class weak in body and depressed in mind, your kind looks, prayers, and expressions have raised my drooping soul. As I saw you, one by one, leave the ranks of the devil and join our little band, my spirit rejoiced as one who had taken great spoil. You kindly relieved me of every burden you could,—such as visiting, and trying to increase your numbers. I will not take the honour of being the leader, for, indeed, we have all been partners in this blessed work; and my earnest prayer is, that you may show the same kindness, and render the same assistance, to your present leader.....

“I greatly rejoice that you have clung to-

gether. Had you been my converts, you would long since have been scattered to the four winds of heaven ; but you came into the fold by the right door, and it is not the under-shepherd you worship, but Christ, and Christ alone.

“ My views when in health are the same now, as I stand upon the brink of eternity. The first advice I would give you is, *Be Bible Christians*. Study the word of God ; and examine by it, not only your conduct, but your opinions,—not only your faults, but your prejudices,—not only your propensities, but your judgments. Did we but turn our thoughts inward, it would abate much of self-complacency with which we swallow the flattery of others. Flattery hurts not him who flatters not himself. When can we give up this self-inspection ? The true answer is, We may cease to watch when our spiritual enemies cease to assail ; we may cease our self-denial when there is no more need to exercise it. We may give the reins to our imagination when we are sure its tendencies will be towards heaven ; we may neglect to pray when we no longer need the favour of God.

“ I wish your heads (which, I hope, with my own, will be crowned with glory) may never be decorated with flowers. God has adorned your

heads, and the flowers He has given you as a carpet. You cannot love them more than I do ; but I like nature's own productions. ' Let women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety,' &c. Beware of jangling ; protect each other's character, as a mother would a child. Never speak evil of ministers. Study to mind your own business, and be at peace with all men.

"Those of you who are married, study to please your husbands. If they are unconverted, never cease to pray for them until the vital urn has ceased to breathe.

"To the unmarried,—remember the words of the apostle, ' Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers.' Do not walk with ungodly young men, much less accept their offers. If you do, there will be a bitter cup for you to drink, for few young women have been more faithfully warned.

"Be attentive to the means of grace. Do not be ashamed of speaking for Jesus. Let it not be said of you, that you are a dumb class, and that your voices are never heard in a band-meeting or a lovefeast.

"Many of you are Sunday-school teachers. In this I rejoice ; but study your lessons well.

The children will never forget the impressions you make upon their minds. Work for Jesus in whatever way providence appoints.

“Hoping that the great Head of the Church will sustain, preserve, and keep you faithful unto death,

“I remain

“Your affectionate and happy leader,

“H. BAIRSTOW.”

Such were the wise, gentle, loving words which were sent from the sick-chamber, and even from the margin of the grave, to the members whom this Christian leader had previously met with such delight. That they were thankfully received I doubt not; and I have reason to believe that by some they are remembered still. They will be useful, perhaps, to others; and, though some may differ as to the propriety of wearing flowers, they having become so fashionable of late; yet no Christian woman will object to the general tone of the advice here offered. There is, undoubtedly, great danger in the present day of young people, who make a profession of religion, being led away by the study of the endless fashions in dress which present themselves on every hand. Mr. Wesley

says, "The wearing of gay and costly apparel naturally tends to beget anger, and every turbulent and uneasy passion;" and doubtless he is right. But his sermon on this subject would not be very popular with some of his professed followers now-a-days. Yet, moderation in this, as in other respects, becomes all Christians; and the true adornment is the adornment of a meek and quiet spirit, which, in the sight of God, is of great price.

Mrs. Bairstow was happy in her affliction. It was a painful and a long-protracted one. She became very weak and feeble; and, naturally, her circumstances would have induced much restlessness of mind, and considerable anxiety for her large family. But she was graciously upheld by the Saviour's hand; and she doubtless would have adopted the words of an illustrious countess of Germany, written just two hundred years ago:—

His sorrows and His cross I know
Make death-beds soft, and light the grave;
They comfort in the hour of woe,
They give me all I fain would have.
My God, for Jesu's sake, I pray,
Thy peace may bless my dying day! *

* *Lyra Germanica*, Second Series.

It is in the chamber of affliction, if anywhere, that the true power of Christianity is experienced. There the passive graces of the spirit, resignation, fortitude, and submission, are exemplified. There patience has its perfect work, and there the Christ-like prayer—"Father, not my will, but Thine be done"—is often breathed from the depths of a believing heart. The remarkable words of the prophet Zechariah (chap. xiv. 6, 7) meet with illustrations there:—"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." The light is not clear, and yet it is not dark, in the room where the Christian sufferer lies. It is not day there, and yet it is not night; and it is fully known to the Lord, for by Him it is ordered for the sufferer's good; and when at length the evening comes, the clouds are scattered, and there is light, most beautiful and precious, just at evening time.

In a letter to Mrs. Bairstow from one of her friends, I find the following, which, as illustrative of these views, I here insert:—

"An aged Christian, who for many years had

been regarded as a mother in Israel, was laid upon her dying bed. The aged and the young had often sought her counsel and her prayers, and all expected that her last days would be full of serenity, faith, and love. But to the surprise of every one, a cloud rested upon her mind during the long sickness which conducted her to the portal of the tomb. She was not subject to any distressing fears respecting the future, but there was an absence of that lively sense of the Divine favour which she had experienced so richly during the days of her pilgrimage. This was a matter of sorrow to those who had expected from her a triumphant death-bed testimony. To those who asked her if she was assured of her safety, she said, 'I can trust Him, though I do not feel Him to be as near to me as I could wish.' To another she said, 'Pray that my faith may hold out to the end.' But, just before she died, it pleased God to manifest Himself more fully; and, in reply to a question, she said, 'I have no rapture, but I have a sense of peace which passeth all understanding.' "

Thus was there light at evening time; and the writer of the letter says, "To my own mind there is something inexpressibly sweet in the following lines :—

How blest the righteous when he dies,
When sinks a weary soul to rest !
How mildly beam the closing eyes !
How gently heaves the expiring breast !
A holy quiet reigns around,
A calm which life nor death destroys ;
Nothing disturbs that peace profound
Which his unfetter'd soul enjoys.

These thoughts were most consolatory to Mrs. Bairstow in her affliction ; but, in her case, the valley of the shadow of death was usually bright with her Saviour's presence, and she could see beyond it the delectable mountains, and could exult in the prospect of entering the pearly gates of "the city which is of pure gold, like unto clear glass."

Letters from the sick chamber and the dying bed of Christians, are often precious documents, as they unfold emotions of no ordinary kind, and prove to us that there is a power in religion of which no philosophy can boast. The following was addressed by Mrs. Bairstow to a friend, when she was very near the margin of the river, and speaks for itself without any comment of mine.

“MACAULAY STREET, *May 21st*, 1862.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“MANY thanks to you for your prompt reply to Annie’s ‘business’ letter; you did right to put in that word. If I give preference to the letters of any of my friends, it is to those I receive from you and your mother.....What a deal of home troubles I could tell! but I will not; suffice it to say that during my long illness I have been enabled to exclaim, ‘Victory! through the blood of the Lamb.’ Though I have become familiar with death, and neighbour to the grave, still if I have the victory daily, what more do I want? Victory implies conflict or warfare. I believe the devil will carry the battle to the gate with me; but how could I for shame to enter the society of that noble army of martyrs and warriors without any scars on my brow? I think I hear you, my self-denying friend, say, ‘I agree with you.’ Come up higher, the pasture is rich and green, the water is clear, and the air is reviving. Many Christians are anxious to have a glorious death-bed, and would it not be gratifying to me? But this is not my anxiety, dearest; my great anxiety is to manifest the spirit of patience and resignation, until Jesus shall come and take me home, just

in His own way. I will tell you of a few sweet walks we have had together. One day He took me with Him to feed the five thousand, and surely my heart burned within me. I think if Christians would break the bread which God imparteth, that is, lay out their talent, then we should see the bread multiply, and the Church grow very rich. Another time I took with Him the last supper. We crossed the brook, entered the garden, and then I was surprised at the desertion of His disciples ; but it was an important lesson for me, as it regards my own friends, though the kindness of the Church to me has been unbounded. I have spent some happy moments with Him in that beautiful home at Bethany. I stood with great admiration at the grave of Lazarus, when He ordered the disciples to take away the stone ; but it was He who brought back the spirit to its offensive house of clay. What a lesson He taught us all ; for He condescended to allow us to be co-workers with God !

“One of our most respectable ladies called the other day. Said she, ‘Mrs. Bairstow, do not your past labours afford you pleasure on your death bed?’ I said, ‘Madam, they simply afford me this pleasure, they increase my grati-

tude to God, that he has enabled me by His own free grace to rise above my natural timidity, and lay out the talent which He committed to my care. I hope He will receive His own with usury.' The lady at once said, 'There are many ladies in this town who are praying that your mantle of usefulness may fall upon them.' 'This morning,' she said, 'I have been giving myself unreservedly to God. I am determined to adopt your simple method of speaking to persons with whom you come in contact on Divine things, and I will not turn myself haughtily away from the poor.' I spoke to her very freely on the subject, and felt myself very much refreshed by her visit. She is a member of another Church.

"And now, dear, tell your mother that nothing would afford me greater pleasure than a personal interview with her. Would I not tell her of the well-laid traps of the devil? Would I not tell her also of the love tokens I have had from Jesus? My husband's paroxysms of grief greatly afflict me. O that he would give me up, as I have given up myself! I rise about one o'clock, am all but carried to bed early in the evening; my medical adviser says some days I had better not rise at all, and nourishing food

must be given every two hours, and as much of stimulating drinks as I can take. He thinks, if I can thus be kept up, by the best of nursing, I may rally again, and live a few weeks during the warm weather. This is the way he talks to me, knowing, as he says, 'For me to live is Christ,' &c.

"If our next meeting is to be in glory, I will hail you with pleasure; but, till then, fight on, believe on, pray on, love on, put on the whole armour, leave no unguarded place. Tell dear Mrs. T——, when I have gone home, I shall be glad if she will write a line or two to my son James, who is now altogether travelling. I need not tell her how anxious I am about him, but I have laid him in the lap of Jesus, with all the rest. Good evening. I am quite exhausted. Pardon my incoherent letter.

"Believe me to be, with love to all,

"Your most devoted friend,

"H. BAIRSTOW."

CHAPTER VIII.

The Haven of Repose.

**DEATH IS THE CORONATION OF, THE BEATIFICATION OF,
THE SOUL, AND THE DAWN OF BLESSEDNESS TO THE
BODY ALSO.**

PASCAL.

Not in this weary world of ours
Can perfect rest be found ;
Thorns mingle with its fairest flowers,
Even on cultured ground ;
Earth's pilgrim still his loins must gird
To seek a lot more blest ;
And this must be his onward word,—
In heaven alone is rest !

BERNARD BARTON.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Haven of Repose.

THE sick-chamber generally wears a melancholy aspect ; and, when the inmate of it is marked for death, friends enter it with sorrow, and, whilst they remain in it, are weighed down and depressed. We do not like death. It is unnatural. It is a rending of the ties which bind us to those we love ; so that, whenever we anticipate its approach, either to ourselves or to any one who is dear to us, we deem it an enemy, and we would fain, if possible, ward it, or drive it, off.

Yet, when the chamber which death is about to visit is occupied by one who can say to it, "Where is thy sting?" and who knows that, beyond the river he is soon to pass, there is a haven of repose,—a land of rest and peace ; its gloom is scattered, to a great extent, and it becomes like a bridal chamber where the bride is preparing for her nuptials, and whence she will go forth to meet the bridegroom. Mrs. Bair-

stow's chamber was such. She occupied it for many months, and for some time it must have been a scene of conflict and of grief; for she had to give up a large family of children, to whom she had been a most affectionate mother; and, as they watched over her in turns, or paid her a visit for a few moments, as her strength was able to bear it, she doubtless looked upon them with an anxious eye, and said to herself, "And must I leave you all?" But grace triumphed over nature; and, resigning herself into the hands of her Saviour, she gave them also into His care, and her mind was kept in peace. In the month of August, 1862, she became much worse; and now wearisome days and nights were appointed to her, and her cough robbed her of sleep, so that she often lay for hours together with but momentary snatches of repose. That she was at times the subject of mental conflicts is not surprising; but her faith was strong, and she came out of these conflicts resting on the arm of her Beloved. On one occasion, she seemed to be dozing, but suddenly turned round, and said, in an almost inaudible voice, "Read to me, if you please, 'There is therefore now no condemnation,' &c." A few verses of that wondrous chapter, the eighth of

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, were read ; when she said, "Thank you ; all is right, all is right !" and her excessive weakness would not allow of her listening to any more.

On another occasion, whilst she was lying motionless, a friend whispered in her ear,—

The fire our graces shall refine !

when she immediately caught up the words ; and, with uplifted hands, said, "Yes ; but when I enter heaven, and see Jesus, I think a sense of my unworthiness will make me try to hide myself from His glorious presence."

After a severe fit of coughing, she would sometimes say, "There will be no cough *there* ;" and when she was told of one and another of her fellow-travellers who had entered the pearly gates, she would say, "O when will my turn come?" but then, as if checking her apparent want of submission, she would add, "Lord, not my will, but Thine, be done."

She was frequently visited during her illness by the Rev. J. S. Workman, one of the ministers of the Buxton-Road Circuit ; and to him I am indebted for the following remarks :—

"It has not been my privilege, during my ministerial career, to meet with many equal to

the late Mrs. Bairstow, in devotion to the Saviour, and unwearied zeal in His service. She was, indeed, a true 'sister of mercy,' conferring not with flesh and blood, but prompt to the call of duty,—whether to the class-room, or to the chamber of sickness,—to rescue a fallen one from sin and shame, or to enter the haunt of the fever-stricken and dying. Her ardent love for her Divine Master, and her great moral courage, often led her to do that from which the more timid would shrink. I have known her encounter the worst of men and women in the worst of places; and, with tears of tenderness and tones of earnestness, beseech them to 'flee from the wrath to come.' Instances of good frequently came under my notice; but 'The Day' alone can disclose the extent of good which, by the Divine blessing, she was enabled to accomplish. She was deeply attached to the Church of her choice, and much concerned that Methodism should maintain its simplicity, purity, and power. Her concern for the salvation of her children amounted to an anxiety observant by all who had frequent intercourse with her.

"During her last illness it was my joy often to visit her, and I never did so without being blessed myself. Her calm, unwavering trust in

Christ, as her only Saviour ; her resignation to the will of God in removing her from an active sphere of usefulness, and from the increasing claims of a large and interesting family ; her sweet and serene peace ; and her glowing hope of heaven, shed around her sick-bed a sacred influence which was almost irresistible. It was my privilege to administer to her the memorials of her Saviour's death not long before her removal hence, and never will the scene be forgotten. Her joy was too deep for words, and frequently evinced itself in tears and smiles. All her family were present. When utterance was given her, in deeply solemn and fervent strains she invoked God's blessing on all around her, on the Church, and the world. Prayer soon melted into praise. Her rapture was great, and seemed the commencement of that joy into which she was about to enter. The end soon came ; but it was not death,—it was a departure,—a sweet sleep into the awakening beyond."

The last week of her life was one of very severe suffering ; but she never uttered an impatient word. Once she said, " Help, sweet Jesus ; " and then, very softly, she whispered,—

Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife !

A day or two before she died, when she was literally gasping for breath, she said, "Not gone, but nearly home. Victory! Victory!" One day in December, her husband said to her, "Now, my love, I have finished all my journeys for this year, and I do not intend to leave you again." She exclaimed, "Thank God;" and then she said, after a moment's pause, uttering the words very slowly,—

Yonder's my house and portion fair,
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home.

She then, closing her eyes and opening them again, exclaimed, with almost supernatural energy, "*Ay, my abiding home!*" On the following evening, Mr. Bairstow, seeing that her end was near, inquired if he might bring the children into the room. Motioning with her hand, she tried to articulate, "Temptation," probably thinking that the sight of the dear ones would disturb her mind. They came; she waved her hand, and said, "Good-bye," and presently her spirit passed away to the realms of immortality and joy, December 19th, 1862.

"'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints;' precious, and also beauti-

ful. It is to them the most blessed of experiences. They are never so well situated to glorify God as in their dying hours. Then they can display the tenderness of His care, the truth of His promises, the supports of His everlasting love, as they can in no other circumstances. While the eye of the body is closing to the beauties of earth, the eye of the soul is opening to the glories that are to be revealed in them. While their hold of all that life holds dear is relaxing, they cling with a firmer grasp of faith, and a closer embrace of love, to the things that are unseen and eternal in the heavens. While the outward man perishes, the inward man is renewed more and more. The day of their death is indeed better than the day of their birth; for, rich with all their treasures of spiritual knowledge and experience,—the growth and accumulation of a whole lifetime of discipline,—they come to their last hour like the mellow fruit that gathers into itself all the life of the tree, and all the dew and sunshine of summer, and at last bends and breaks the branch from which it hangs. The idea of death to them has nothing death-like in it. That death which men dread is to them swallowed up in victory. It is but the passing shadow between faith and sight,

hope and full fruition, transient and transparent as the last filmy cloud that veils for a moment the sunrise. The chamber of death is none other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven. O ! the dying of a Christian is not a fading away ; it is an apotheosis, a transfiguration, a bursting into blossom. It is a triumph, and not a sadness. It is like the setting of the sun on a calm summer evening, which makes the western sky ablaze with splendour, and glorifies even the dark clouds that gather round his descent. It is like the changing of the sombre green foliage of summer into the gorgeous brightness of the autumnal hues, investing even the sadness of decay and death with an unearthly beauty. Who, on beholding such a marvellous proof of the transforming and sustaining power of grace, would not exclaim, with Balaam's earnestness, and more than Balaam's purpose of attainment, ' Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his ? ' Our life is a vapour that appeareth for a little, and then vanisheth away ; but this brief vapour life of ours is laden with eternity, and is a fact so real and grand as to strike the imagination with amazement. We can make it very beautiful, or very gloomy. Let it not be to any of us

the mere thick mist that broods over the ceaseless machinery of toil and care, or the foul exhalation that rises from the muddy pools of the world's pleasures; but let it be what God intended it to be,—a cloud in the height of heaven, in the world, but not of it,—brightened by the Sun of Righteousness, and assuming fairer and more heavenly hues as it nears the gates of the west." *

Illustrative of these beautiful sentiments was the death of this Christian lady. It was indeed a departure,—a passing away,—an entrance into a world of light and joy. For that the spirit does not sleep, but continues conscious after the death of the body, is so clearly taught in the pages of inspired Scripture, that one wonders how the fact could ever have been questioned by those who profess to take that volume as their guide. There is an intermediate state, called Paradise, or Heaven, into which the believer enters immediately on the dissolution of the earthly tabernacle; for of Lazarus it is said, that he was carried by angels "into Abraham's bosom;" and St. Paul's desire was to depart,

* "Bible Teachings in Nature," by Hugh Macmillan, p. 202.

and be "with Christ, which is far better." It is true that the sainted dead are not yet "made perfect," but are waiting for the consummation of all things, and anticipating the resurrection of the dead; for St. John saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held,—the martyrs of the early Church, that is, and the representatives of all others who suffer in the cause of Christ,—“and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (Rev. vi. 9, 10.) But, were they unconscious, they could not do this; and we must therefore reject, as, indeed, the Christian Church has done from the beginning, the doctrine of the sleep of the soul; leaving it to the materialists to derive what comfort from it they can.

How great, then, must the change have been which the spirit of the sufferer of whom we write experienced, as it escaped from its earthly tenement! What the separate state really is,—how calm, how blessed, how glorious,—we know not; but that it must differ greatly from the present we cannot for a moment doubt. It is a state of rest; of freedom from care, anxiety, and

pain ; of holy fellowship with the Church of the First-born ; and of closer union with Christ, its Head and Lord. On this state Mrs. Bairstow now entered. Her family and friends mourned their loss ; but it was her unspeakable and eternal gain : and now she waits, in common with the redeemed of all nations and of all lands, the final consummation, when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him ; when the archangel's trump shall sound ; when the earth shall cast forth her dead ; and when, in the new heavens and in the new earth, righteousness shall for ever dwell.

For God ere long will summon all
Who once on earth were born ;
This flesh shall hear the trumpet's call,
And live again that morn.
And when in Christ His Son we wake,
These skies asunder roll,
And all the bliss of heaven shall break
Upon the raptured soul.

And He will lead the white-robed throng
To His fair Paradise,
Where from the marriage-feast the song
Of endless praise shall rise.

And from His fathomless abyss
Of perfect love and truth,
Shall flow perpetual joy and bliss,
In never-ending youth.

Ah, God, now lead me of Thy love
Through this dark world aright ;
Lord Christ, defend me, lest I rove,
Or lies delude my sight.
And keep me steadfast in the faith,
Till these dark days have ceased ;
And ready still, in life or death,
For Thy great marriage-feast.

A sermon on the death of Mrs. Bairstow was preached in Buxton Road chapel, by the Rev. Robert Thompson, the Superintendent of the Circuit ; and many letters of condolence, expressive of the high estimate of her character formed by the writers, were received from friends both near and remote, by her bereaved husband and children. I insert the following from one who again occupies the position he then did, and to whom Methodism in Huddersfield is much indebted.

“HUDDERSFIELD, *January 8th*, 1863.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,

“I am desired by the Buxton Road leaders’ meeting, to tender you their friendly

and Christian condolence, under the painful dispensation with which it hath pleased Divine Providence to visit you, by the painfully protracted illness and subsequent death of your attached partner, and our own highly esteemed friend and co-worker in the service of God. However, you sorrow not as those without hope; and we thankfully rejoice, knowing that our loss is her eternal gain. ‘Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.’

“ Mrs. Bairstow was extensively known and much beloved, both in her own and other Circuits, as well as by many who unhappily belong to no church, by her godly example and prayerful admonitions. Humanly speaking, her removal leaves a gap it will take time to make up; but let us not judge the Lord by feeble sense, but trust Him for His grace, knowing that behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face. He removes His workmen, but fails not to carry on His work; and so is it in families. He thins our ranks, but gives increased strength and blessing to those that remain, assuring them, that what is now painfully mysterious, shall be plain and intelligible

hereafter, and found amongst the all things working together for their good. Rest, my Christian friend, on the promises of God, and we will unitedly intercede with Him, that you may have power to do so. And now, commending you and your dear children to His Fatherly protection and guidance, believe me to remain your faithful friend, and on behalf of the leaders and stewards,

“Yours faithfully and sincerely,

“GEO. BROOKE, *Circuit Steward.*

“*Mr. O. Bairstow,*

“*Fitzwilliam Street, Huddersfield.*”

It remains only to add, that from the testimony of all who knew her, Mrs. Bairstow was no ordinary Christian. As a sister of mercy, as a leader of a class, as a wife, and as a mother, she was surpassed by very few. In the former capacity she, like her great Master, “went about doing good ;” and amongst others whom she sought out and tried to save, were poor girls who had been led astray from the paths of virtue, and whose circumstances she mourned over with the tenderest sympathy. She visited nearly every house in Huddersfield in which the social evil had taken up its abode ; and though she was often received

with the sneer of contempt and the laugh of hardened profligacy, yet she was the means of snatching not a few from the jaws of the destroyer, and of leading them to the fold of the Good Shepherd. In the formation of mothers' meetings she was indefatigable; and, in co-operation with several ladies in Huddersfield, of different denominations, she collected together the wives of working men, who were addressed, from time to time, on their domestic relationships, and on the best way to make home happy, and to secure a home in heaven when they should bid adieu to earth. The model lodging-house, the infirmary, and the town prison, all received visits at intervals from this devoted woman; and often did she spend her utmost strength in trying to benefit their afflicted inmates.

As a class-leader she was faithful, judicious, and most devoted, making the case of each member of the class her own; and entering with peculiar tact into each one's circumstances, and giving advice accordingly with wise discernment and with mildest love. The preceding pages testify to her usefulness in this capacity; and many still living remember with gratitude her counsels and her prayers; whilst some are

with her in the spirit world, where, perhaps, their intercourse has been renewed in the light which makes manifest in the mystery of redeeming love.

As a wife and mother, she was one to whom the words of King Lemuel were applicable: "The heart of her husband safely trusted in her." "She looked well to the ways of her household, and ate not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed: her husband also, and he praiseth her." (Prov. xxxi. 14-28.) Both for their temporal and spiritual weal she did everything in her power; and her desire for the conversion of her children was such, that when one of them was under deep conviction of sin, she left her bed in the hour of midnight to plead with him at the throne of grace, when he was enabled to believe in Christ, "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world."

And she, being dead, yet speaketh. "The memory of her life sheds," says one who knew her well, "a halo around those who shared her sorrows and her joys." Some considerable time after her death, one whom she sincerely loved was in a distant part of the country, where he was placed in circumstances of great tempta-

tion. The enemy of souls had laid his snares for entrapping his victim in the most cunning manner; and the youth was on the very brink of ruin, when he heard what he thought was the well-known voice of his friend speaking to him, as if from heaven, and saying, "If you yield, you are undone for ever." Roused by the words, from whatever spot they came, the film was taken from his eyes, he dashed the cup of temptation from his hands, and he went to the throne of mercy, and there sought strength to stand in the evil day.

In concluding the task of preparing this Memoir, I cannot but rejoice that we have had, and still have, both in the Methodist and other Churches, so many devoted Christian females; and doubtless their number is far greater than we have any conception of, as the lives of but very few are written to meet the public eye. There are true "sisters of mercy" everywhere. In the lanes and alleys of our crowded cities, where squalor, misery, and want have taken up their abode, they are frequently to be found pursuing their holy and self-denying work of instructing the ignorant, and of administering to the necessities of the poor. In our infirmaries,

asylums, prisons, and reformatories, they are to be seen watching over the sick and dying, or trying to lead back the erring to the ways of truth. In our day and Sabbath schools they are gathering round them the rising generation, and pouring into their tender minds the first principles of moral and religious truth. In far-distant lands they are helping forward the work of the evangelization of the heathen; and, as the wives, or sisters, or helpers of missionaries, are themselves missionaries of the noblest type. And last, but not least, in quiet homes, some of which are stately mansions, adorned with the arts and refinements of life, but a greater number of which are but humble dwellings, cottages, or, it may be, garrets, they are training their own or other children in the service of the Lord Jesus, and thus fitting them for a holy and a useful life. All hail! ye Christian women! In your labours we rejoice; in your trials we sympathize; in your successes we exult. But it is Christianity that elevates woman, and calls her talents and her gifts into exercises such as these. Heathenism enthrals her; Christianity sets her free. Heathenism makes her a bond-slave; Christianity acknowledges her equality with man, and places her as a helper by his

side. Heathenism crushes out the life and energy she possesses ; Christianity expands her mind and ennobles all the faculties of her soul. Let woman know how much she is indebted to the religion of the cross ; let her sit with Mary at the feet of Jesus ; let her imbibe yet more and more the spirit of the Gospel of peace and love, and society at large will be everywhere the gainer, whilst she herself will be happy in her toil ; and, full of holy hope, will look forward to that brighter sphere in which the spirit will bathe itself in seas of light, and in which the reward of doing good will consist, in part, in fellowship with those who have been won from error's path, and still more in the commendation which the exalted Saviour will pronounce on each labourer in His vineyard,—

SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD.



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